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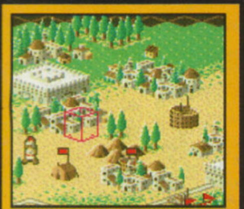

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THUNDER FORCE IV, GLEY LANCER AND MORE...

THE ULTIMATE BEAT'EM-UP
PAGE 46

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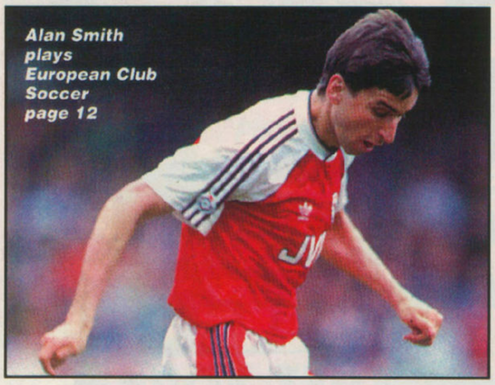

Alan Smith plays European Club Soccer page 12

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Game in Manchester's Arndale Centre is where we swooped to find some victims, erm, subjects.

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Platform games are explored this month. Both the top 10 and the duds of this genre are revealed.

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If you need a testimony to the failure of the British education system take a look at our letters page.

46 FIST FIGHT

Everyone has their idea of what constitutes the ultimate beat'em-up and the *MAG* team is no exception. Turn to page 46 to see what wonderful ideas we came up with.

LASER TAG

Laser Quest and assorted clones are taking the nation by storm as hordes of people have a go at being Hans Solo for 20 minutes. Hugh plays Hans while long-haired Jason plays Chewbacca.

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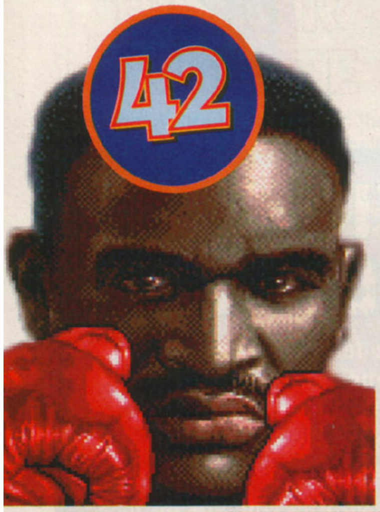

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★ **WIN MANGA VIDEOS! from the company which released Akira**

★ **Virgin bomber jackets and T-shirts for all – well almost all! Page 7**

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THE KREMLIN REVEALED

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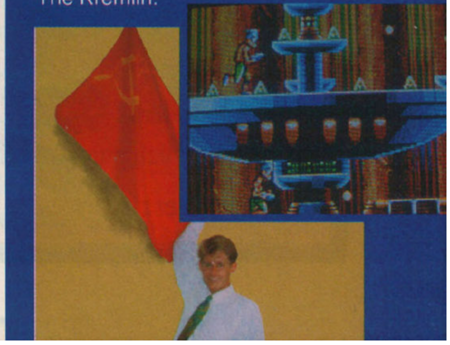
Jools went all the way down to Surrey to investigate Domark's very own development house, The Kremlin.



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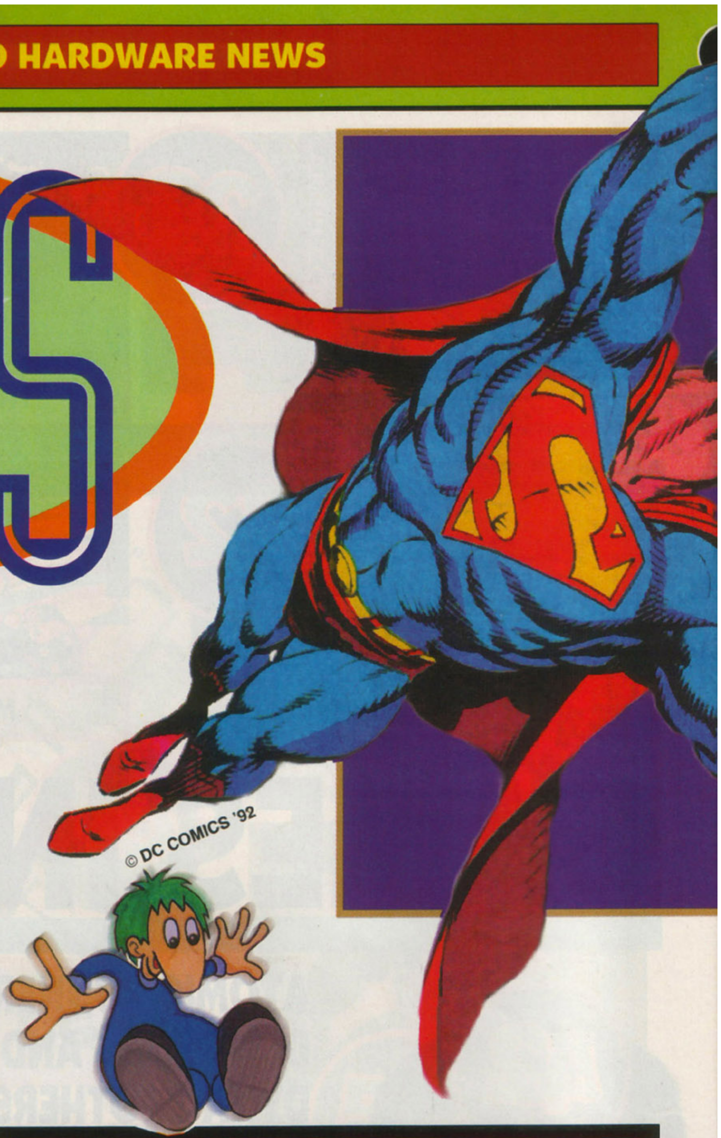
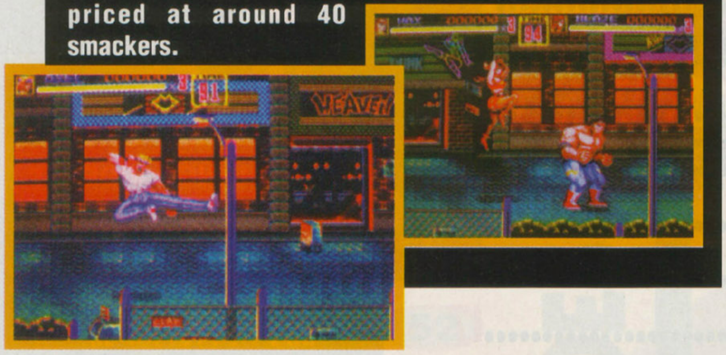


STREETS OF RAGE II

Sega is promising that Streets of Rage II will be the best ever Mega Drive beat'em-up. Taking all the notable features from the original game and snazzing them up with whopping great sprites and sampled sounds this is promising to be a classic.

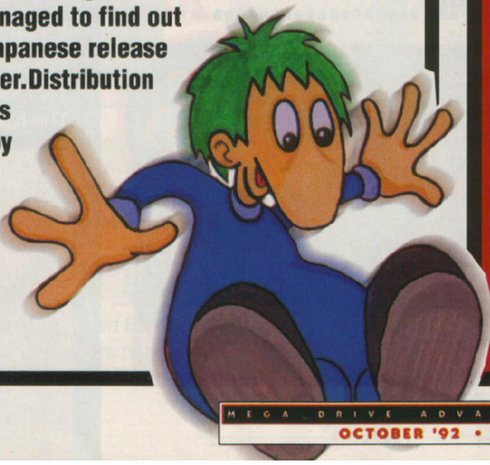
Crammed into a huge 16-megabit cart, Rage II looks set to lead the way for the next generation of Mega Drive games. Expect an official release from Sega at Christmas priced at around 40 smackers.



LEMMINGS

We are still anxiously awaiting the UK release date for Lemmings, but we have managed to find out that the US and Japanese release is to be in November.Distribution in both countries is to be carried out by Sunsoft.

When the official cart will arrive in this country is anyone's guess!



AMSTRAD TERRA DRIVE

Imagine a machine featuring the best from the Mega Drive and the VGA PC. Sounds amazing doesn't it? Amstrad is hoping to produce such an item by Christmas. The company is currently negotiating with Sega and hopes to unveil a machine based on its PC range that will sell for less than £900!

Based around 68000 and 80286 CPUs it will look similar to a normal PC, but will have a Mega Drive cartridge slot next to the 3.5 inch disk drive.

In Japan, such a machine has been available under the moniker of Terra Drive, unfortunately it hasn't proved to be too successful due to a rather loony pricing plan by Sega.

PURPLE VIRGIN-WARMER COMPO

Ever experienced the desire to proclaim your virginity by means of a designer bomber jacket or T-shirt like the nutters in this photo? You have? Well now's your chance to get your grubby mitts on some trendy threads worth about £300.

We've got five rather natty black jackets tastefully decorated with the Virgin logo to give away, along with 10 pretty expensive looking T-shirts.

All you have to do to get your hands on one of these is rummage around and find the most exciting purple thing you can. Then pop it in an envelope and send it along to us at: Purple Virgin-warmers, *MAG*, Maverick Magazines, Waters Green House, Waters Green, Macclesfield SK11 6LF.

Remember, we need to be impressed!

• •

SUPERMAN

Coming soon from Virgin is the officially licensed game of Superman. Developed by US software giant Sunsoft, it's promised that this will be the best multidirectional scrolling meanie basher ever to grace the Mega Drive. Only time will tell if this claim is true. Taking on the form of a platform beat'em-up the game takes you through loads of levels filled with baddies who must be punched, kicked, zapped and sought after with your X-ray vision. Numerous hazards will have to be overcome including stray lumps of Kryptonite and the numerous contraptions set up by the villainous Lex Luthor.

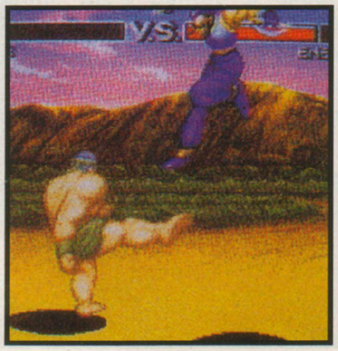
Expect to see this 8-megabit cart winging its way to British stores at the beginning of December.

POWER ATHLETE

Drooled at Street Fighter II on the SNES knowing that the only half-decent beat'em-up on the Mega Drive was Budokhan? Now Kaneko is coming to the rescue with Power Athlete.

Based on a similar scenario to the great and mighty Street Fighter, Power Athlete sees two fighters trying to kick the shit out of each other. Work your way up through the levels to become the ultimate fighter.

Graphically it looks very impressive, and the sprites are expected to be some of the biggest ever seen on the Mega Drive. There is no definite release date, but it looks like it'll be this year.

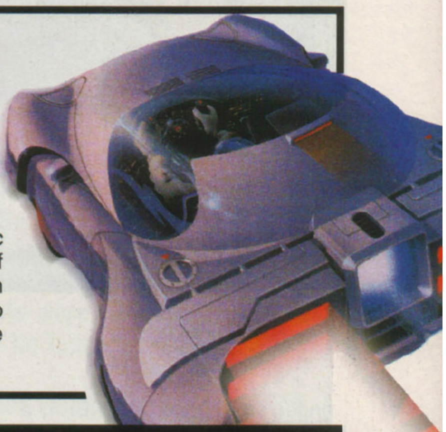


JUNKER'S HIGH

Quality 3D racing games on the Mega Drive are definitely scarce at the moment, but Japanese developer Sims is hoping to put this situation right with its futuristic road race, Junker's High.

According to our Japanese source the game is due for eastern release sometime this month. Whether or not it will reach these shores officially is unclear.

Being one of those 'behind the car' jobs, the game looks like a cross between Turbo Outrun and the ancient classic Pole Position. Using a variety of scenarios the race takes you from the streets of the metropolis to the snowy wastes of the mountains.



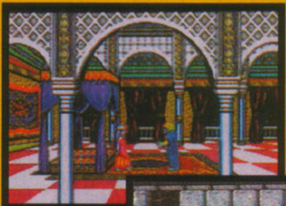
PRINCE OF PERSIA

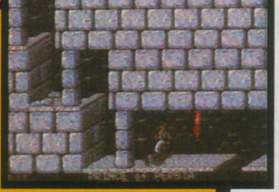
Prince of Persia from Victor Musical Industries is another CD only title. Based on the highly successful Broderbund original, the new game adds loads of new levels to the dungeons and incorporates new graphic sequences and super-duper music.

Previous versions on other formats were considered to be classics, so if you love quality platform games with grade A presentation you cannot fail to love this.

You've got an hour and a half to rescue your girlie from the Evil Grand Vizier before he has his wicked way with her. He'll do everything possible to make sure you don't get in the way while he's trying to have a good bonk.

It should be available in Japan as you read this.





EXCUSE ME!..

Oops! Who noticed our minor boo-boo last month then? Unfortunately Speedball II was credited to Electronic Arts when it is actually going to be distributed by Virgin. sorry about that!

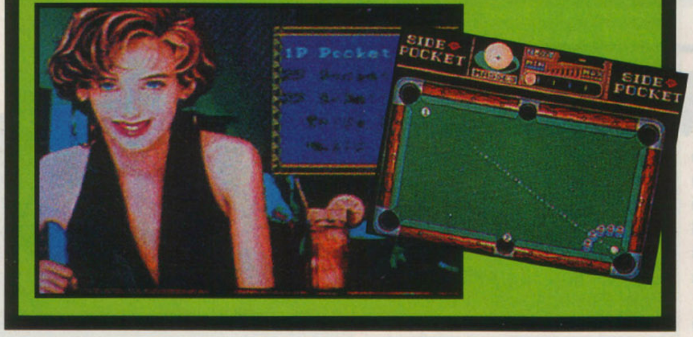
SIDE POCKET

A pool game is about to be released in the States by Data East. Side Pocket will offer straight pool as we know it, nine ball (how the Americans play it) and a trick shot section.

Each of these disciplines can be played against the computer, on your own during practice sessions or in a two-player tournament.

The game is hosted by some stunningly well-drawn women, and who said sexism was dead? Not me, I've been trying to keep it alive for years.

Loiter around your local grey importer in October for more news of a release date.



GAME GENIE

Hornby Hobbies has officially launched the Mega Drive version of its acclaimed game enhancer, the Game Genie. Developed in the UK by Codemasters, it offers not only cheats like infinite lives but other effects such as increasing difficulty levels.

Its £44.99 price puts the Game Genie in direct competition with the top-selling Action Replay Pro. The Pro allows the user to find codes for specific functions, whereas the Game Genie only enables users to take a guess based on codes supplied by Hornby.

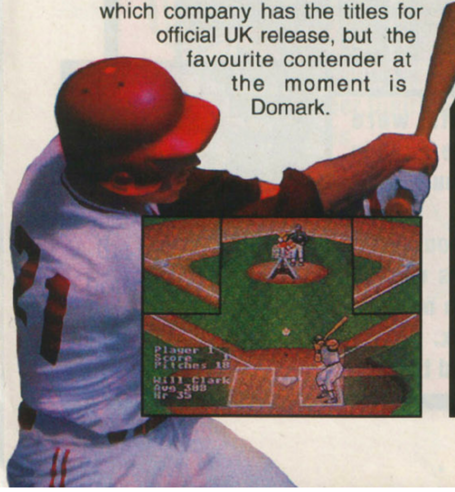
Datel, maker of the Pro, doesn't offer direct support to users in the form of new codes, bar a few in the manual. Hornby Hobbies however, provides a complete code service, updated every 24 hours. This covers every UK game as soon after its release as possible.

Available in just about everywhere, Hornby hopes it will repeat the success in the UK it had in the States. At the end of '91 the Mega Drive and NES versions of the Game Genie outsold all software titles and it was also the largest selling toy apart from Sega and Nintendo products.

GAME GENIE
16-BIT

TENGEN RELEASES

Tengen's new releases RBI 4, a baseball sim; Rampart, the excellent castle bashing game; and Gauntlet the perennial exploration game will all be available very soon in Japan and the US. It hasn't been announced which company has the titles for official UK release, but the favourite contender at the moment is Domark.



JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS

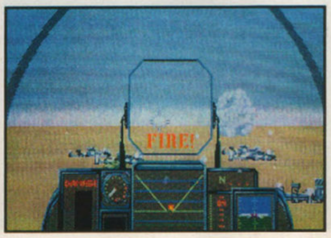
Jennifer Capriati, 16-year-old American tennis ace and on-court weeper, has allowed her prestigious name to adorn a Mega Drive game.

The game has been imaginatively entitled Jennifer Capriati Tennis by publisher Renovation, the company also responsible for Slimeworld in the States. It is claimed that "all the realism of professional tennis is here". Well we'll have to wait for its release in October to see.

AFTERBURNER III

Based on G-Loc, Afterburner III will be available on Sega CD only and will take advantage of the unit's scaling and rotational graphics abilities.

After making a complete cock-up twice before, it looks as though Sega is having one last stab at the definitive Afterburner conversion. Currently in the final stages of development, it certainly looks a darned sight more impressive than the previous feeble attempts. It's just a shame that it's CD only! Look out for it around September.



CHARTS

SUPPLIED BY GAME

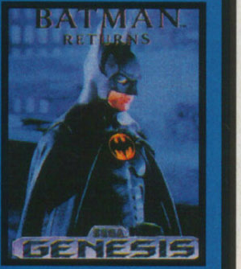
- ★ 1 Taz-Mania
- ★ 2 Senna Super GP
- ➡ 3 Olympic Gold
- ➡ 4 World Cup Italia 90
- R 5 Super Hang On
- R 6 Alex Kidd Enchanted
- ➡ 7 Desert Strike
- R 8 Super Thunderblade
- R 9 Zany Golf
- ➡ 10 Streets of Rage

New Entry ★ Non Mover ➡
Risen ➡ Re-entry R Fallen ➡

BATMAN RETURNS

Eager Batfans will need patience before they see an incarnation of this summer's blockbuster Batman Returns on the Mega Drive.

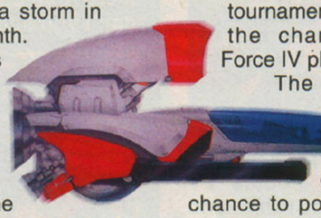
Sega, in its unquestionably infinite wisdom, has decided to save the release for a worldwide debut on 24 November. Yup, that is the same day as Sonic 2's release and, it seems, a few others.



Will everyone be able to afford to buy all the games they want on the same day? I fear not. Ah well, better start saving up all those pennies now.

THUNDER FORCE IV

The public launch of Thunder Force IV (reviewed on page 24) caused quite a storm in Japan last month. Hundreds of sweaty Mega Drive owners piled into an arena to have the first play on the keenly awaited shoot'em-up.



As well as being able to have a fiddle with all its bits, a tournament was held to find the champion Thunder Force IV player.

The winner marched away with a CD version of the game and the chance to pose manfully with two beautiful women.

SEGA AT THE OLYMPICS

In keeping with its sponsorship of the Olympics, Sega installed a huge number of video game units into the halls of the Olympic village.

A total of 400 Mega Drives with 1,200 games were on site alongside a multitude of Sega arcade machines including the revolutionary R-360. Five halls were filled to overflowing and proved to be incredibly popular among the athletes.

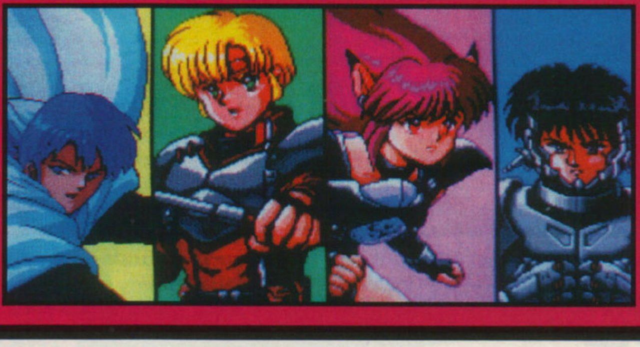
Around 500 people per hour visited the video centre including stars such as Magic Johnson and Tony Kucoc. Even Prince Felipe of Spain was seen there!

PHANTASY STAR IV

Taking all of the very best bits from the previous three games in this series Phantasy Star IV looks to be the ultimate in Mega Drive role-playing. Expect to see it by the end of the year from Sega priced at something ludicrously high.

Set in the year 2284 you must explore many new uncharted worlds in your quest to rid the universe of the evil Dark Force.

It is promised that fans of the previous games will have an absolute field-day with this one!



The Kensington Roof Gardens location was kitted out in full Sega regalia complete with video wall and gigantic banner. In the background you'll notice young Mr Crane from children's TV, while in the far right stands Julian Clary, resplendent in his black rubber combo

1992 SEGA EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

The finale of a year's Sega games playing resulted in Reza Abdolali from Germany winning the coveted title of European Sega Champion. Held at the Kensington Roof Gardens on 31 July the competition placed the nine best players from across Europe together in one furious competition.

Reza at the ripe old age of 20 took the European Champion title from the 1991 holder Daniel Curley of Manchester and as his prize Reza received the first official Mega CD unit in Britain. On top of this he took away a special trophy, a rather natty Sega baseball jacket, a huge pile of Michael Jackson CDs and numerous other goodies including T-shirts and games.

The UK was represented by 14-year-old Karl Roberts from Port Talbot in South Wales whose gallant effort saw him finishing in fourth place.

Just before engaging in their video battle the contestants were obliged to talk to hordes of TV and radio presenters (Oh, what it is to be famous eh?) before moving on to hang out with Chris Kelly and Chris Smith from Kriss Kross. Were they forced at gunpoint perchance?

British champion Karl Roberts is interviewed by Radio 5 before moving on to compete in the gruelling competition

Reza Abdolali the 20-year-old from Germany walked away with the first prize of the Mega CD and goodies. He also sports some rather splendid sideys rarely seen this side of the 1970s

Compéred by kiddies TV presenter Andy Crane and professional transvestite Julian Clary, the contestants had to test their games playing abilities on five top games. Sonic the Hedgehog, Road Rash, Moonwalker, Olympic Gold and the previously unseen Sega platform game, Greendog.

GIMME THE PRIZE

Following the rigours of the competition all of the finalists were chauffeur driven in stretch limos to the Michael Jackson concert at Wembley Stadium where they took VIP grandstand seats. After a night at a hotel they were whisked away to Barcelona to enjoy a once in a lifetime weekend at the 1992 Olympics. Talk about a hectic few days eh?

GALAHAD

Electronic Arts has quashed rumours that Leander would be Psygnosis' first Mega Drive release by releasing the game itself under the title Galahad.

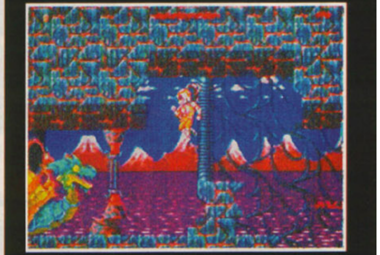
Galahad is the third Psygnosis game to published by Electronic Arts on the Mega Drive, the others being Shadow of the Beast and Fatal Rewind.

Available in mid-October for £39.99, Galahad finds the player in the raunchy world of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Gally must wander through 22 levels packed with evil knights, giant dragons and Morgana's army of hideous monsters.

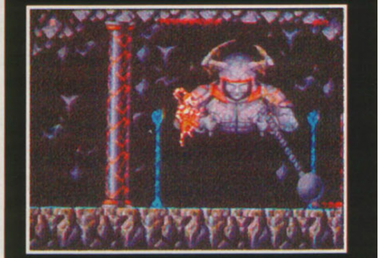
Caves, treetops and Arthurian villages will all play their part when Galahad leaps about swinging his sword and doing his best to find the Magical Keys of Honour, only then will he be able to progress through his quest.

His final mission is the most important of all though, he must rescue the beautiful Princess Elaine.

Once through this the game is completed and Sir Galahad will be knighted "by Sir Lancelot, and reside at Camelot where they eat Spamalot and push the pramalot". Hmm, great quote there from Electronic Arts don't you think!



Galahad from EA is based on Psygnosis' Leander. Psygnosis seems happy to continue licensing its software to EA for release on the Mega Drive. Only time will tell if the company is going to begin releasing its own products



IT'S UNREAL! IT'S AMAZING IT'S HERE!

GRAB A GOODIE

CLAIM YOURS NOW!!

BEVERLY HILLS 90210

HEY 90210 FANS!

CLAIM YOUR 90210 T-SHIRT NOW!!
0839-550030

STICKER PACKS GALORE
PLAY THE QUIZ AND CLAIM YOURS!!!
0839-550031

FACT PACK PLUS POSTER
0839-550032

WANNA FIGHT?

GET YOURS NOW!

CLAIM YOUR acne T-SHIRT

YES, IF YOU ANSWER OUR EASY QUIZ, YOU CAN CLAIM A BRILL ACNE T-SHIRT. CLAIM YOURS NOW!
0839-550033

CALLIN' PRANKSTERS
FREE JOKE PACK!
0839-550034

ARE YOU CONSOLE CRAZY!
THEN JUST LOOK WHAT YOU CAN CLAIM!

GET A CONSOLE CRAZY T-SHIRT
WOW!
0839-550035

FREE CHEAT BOOK!

TIPS FORCE
TIPS FORCE

0839-550036

EVERY CALLER WHO COMPLETES THE QUIZ - CAN CLAIM A PRIZE!

GENUINE COLLECTOR'S BADGES FOR YOU!!!

THUNDERBIRDS
PIN BROOCHES

THEY ARE FAB!

RARE

COLLECT THE SET

CALL NOW
LINES OPEN 24HRS A DAY!!

0839-550037

CALL TO CLAIM YOURS

ARE YOU MAD ABOUT WRESTLING?

GET A HOLD OF THESE GENUINE WRESTLING STARS BADGES
COLLECT 'EM, SWAP 'EM!!!

0839-550038

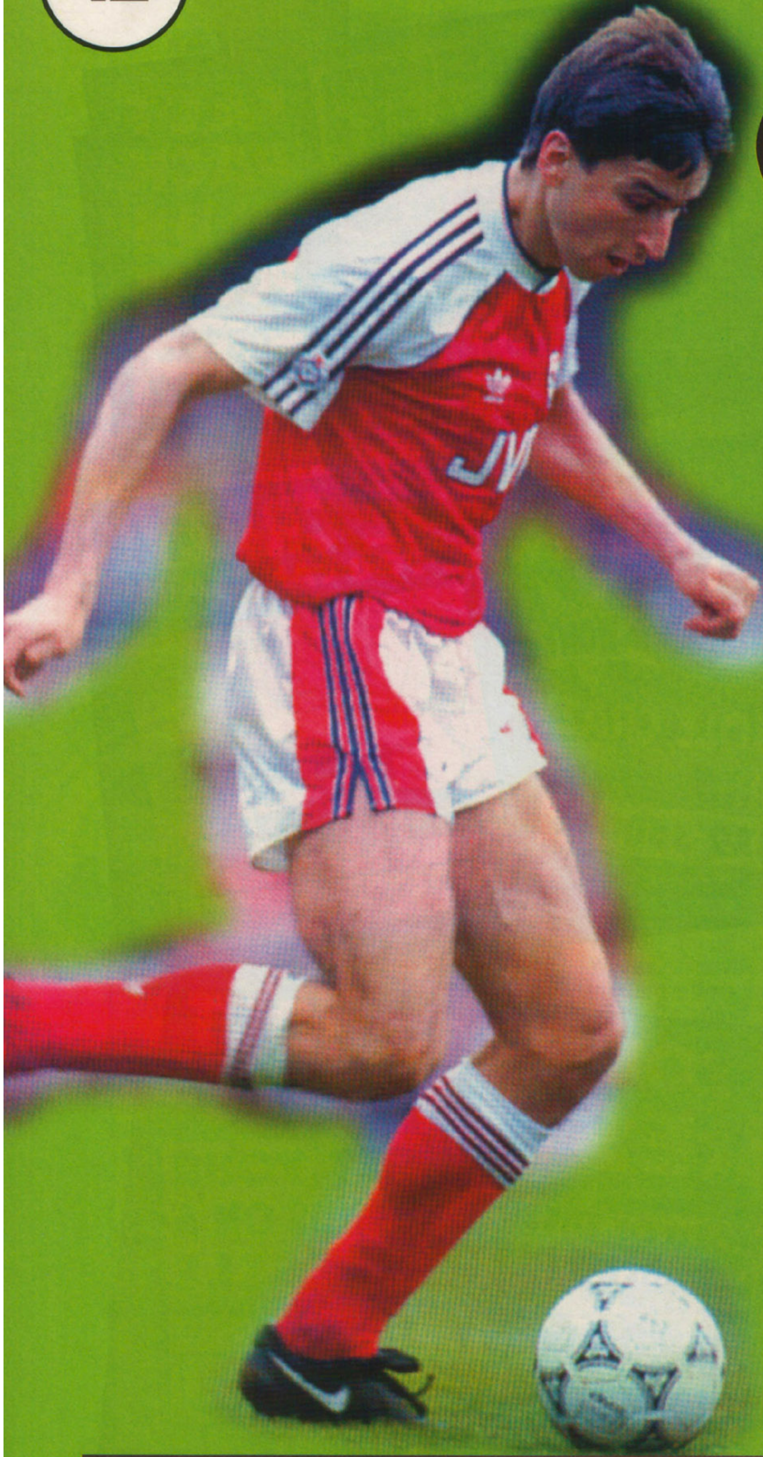
CHECK IT OUT!

GET YOUR HANDS ON A WRESTLE STICKER PACK
0839-550039

FREE T-SHIRT
WOW!
CLAIM YOURS
0839-550040

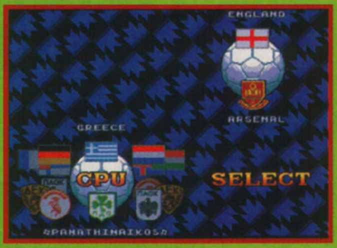
WRESTLE MANIAC

CALLS COST 36p / MIN. CHEAP RATE, 48p / MIN. ALL OTHER TIMES INC, VAT. PLEASE ASK PERMISSION BEFORE YOU CALL. AVERAGE LENGTH OF CALL 5½ MINS WHICH WILL COST £1.98 AT CHEAP RATE. POST, PACKING + HANDLING CHARGES: T-SHIRTS £1.75, OTHERS £1. © MEGAFONE LTD 1992. MEGAFONE, SANDYLANDS HOUSE, MORECAMBE, LANCS., LA3 1DG.



STAR

This month our attention turned to the ever-popular sport of soccer as we popped off to speak to the darling of Highbury and top England player, Alan Smith.



Arsenal go in for a friendly against an unpronounceable Greek team. Alan looks after Arsenal's destiny while I decide to go with the mustachioed Greeks

There seems to be some amount of dispute as to the quality of soccer games on the Mega Drive at the moment. In the past couple of years they have been few and far between, but with the recent release of European Club Soccer from Virgin it looks as though things are about to change.

Just to check out how good it really is we thought that we'd let a proper football player have a bash.

SMITHY SPEAKS OUT

"I think you ought to know, I'm not very good at this sort of thing," was the first thing said by Alan as the Mega Drive was set up. Once plugged in and ready to go it was decided that a two-player game would be in order so we could get used to all of the controls. As you would expect, Alan immediately chose Arsenal as his team while I plumped for some Greek outfit.

After a considerable amount of deliberation as to what formation we should play, a 4-2-4 set-up was agreed upon. Alan chose it first, so who am I to argue with a pro?

As the game began it was immediately noted by Alan that

FAMILY FOOTIE

Come here Dad you're useless. Yes, I know you're the pro but it takes a child to understand these things!

Alan desperately tries to get to grips with this goalie lark. Having given up on that, he tries to score a goal against the computer team

Don't you think my lounge carpet is really, really nice? Do you think I should've gone for the shag pile instead?

Time for a goal I think...it's now or never

THIS MONTH ENGLAND FOOTBALLER ALAN SMITH PLAYS VIRGIN'S EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

"The graphics are really good, especially on this big telly". From this point we both fumbled about for the duration of the match desperately trying to work out how to get a goal past the goalkeepers.

"Do you actually control the goalie, or is it an automatic thing?" asked Alan. "I can't actually tell why he saves it sometimes and why he doesn't others." Good point really. As soon as either team got the ball anywhere near the opposing goal-mouth the goalie seemed to spring to life in a disturbing manner. Who was in control?

Never mind though, come full-time the score was a distinctly average 1:0 to me. It was pure fluke really, but Alan was raring for another go. "It's a good game isn't it? I wasn't expecting it to be quite so fun, but as soon as you start to get the hang of the controls it's quite addictive."

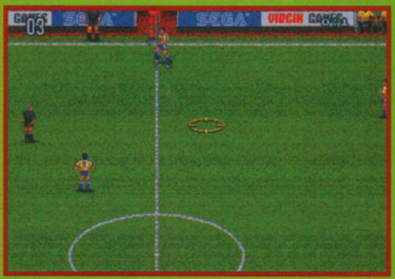
Just to prove that he'd got used to things it was decided that a quick match against the computer would be in order. Choosing to play as the French team Montpellier he entered the game against Manchester United. After the kick off, the computer controlled team immediately sprang into life and stole the ball in a flash. "He tackles a bit hard doesn't he?"

After struggling through to the second half Alan immediately made for the goal in his last minute bid for victory, reaching the penalty spot he went for a storming shot but...abject failure. Oops. "The shooting's a bit vague. If you kick it harder it's not obvious whether it goes further or whether the bloke just boots it in the air!"

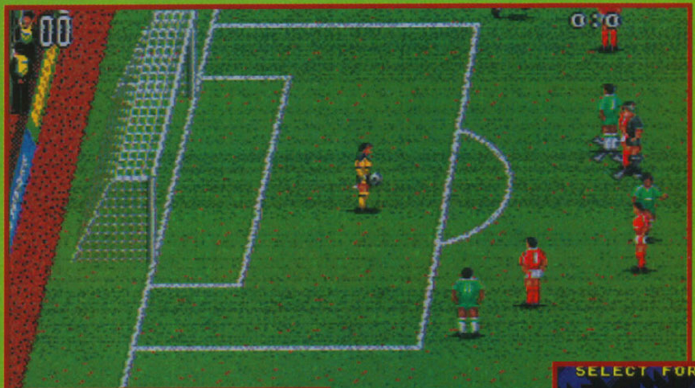
ACTION ANALYSIS

"It's a very good game really, I much prefer it to that Kick Off thing on the Game Gear. The graphics are really nice and they've got all the strips right haven't they?

It's a pity that the controls aren't that easy to get to grips with. The shooting especially is a bit odd and I really can't get the hang of that goalie. Sometimes he saves it and sometimes he doesn't! On the whole though I think it's a very good game."

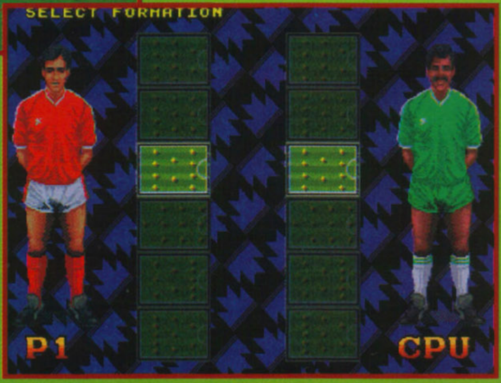


Going for a throw-in in the big game. Using the cross-hair you can decide where to chuck it, but where are all the players?



The Arsenal goalie grabs hold of the ball. How did he get it? We don't know, he just seemed to run around for a bit

Alan wearing his extra special 'not another photograph' face that he saves for these special occasions



A 4-2-4 formation is decided on for both teams. Alan's the pro so I'll go with anything he says

PERSONALITY PROFILE: ALAN SMITH

Alan Smith began his blossoming soccer career at Leicester City way back in 1982. Five years later he joined Arsenal where he remains to this day as a striker.

So far he has had 12 England caps and has been awarded the Golden Boot (for scoring most goals in the league) in 1989 and again in 1991. Apparently he is the only player to have an England cap as both a semi-professional and a full England player.

DUNGEONS

WARRIORS OF THE ETERNAL SUN

This is probably the very first role-playing game for the Mega Drive that uses authentic TSR Dungeons and Dragons rules, monsters, spells and weapons. About bloomin' time really.

REVIEW

There have been a number of good role-playing games which have been released on the Mega Drive. All of them have taken a slightly different approach in terms of presentation, but as yet none have been based on official TSR RPG packages. So as far as I'm aware this is the very first of its kind and is very similar to numerous games released on the PC and Amiga.

The action is spread across two very different styles of play. Exploration of the lands is by means of a fairly basic top-down scrolling affair while more specific and important areas are presented using a 3D first person perspective jobby.

As with all D&D games there is a suitably ambiguous background story to the situation in which you find yourself. After experiencing a big punch up with some goblins your castle is sucked through some kind of temporal warp thingy for no apparent reason.

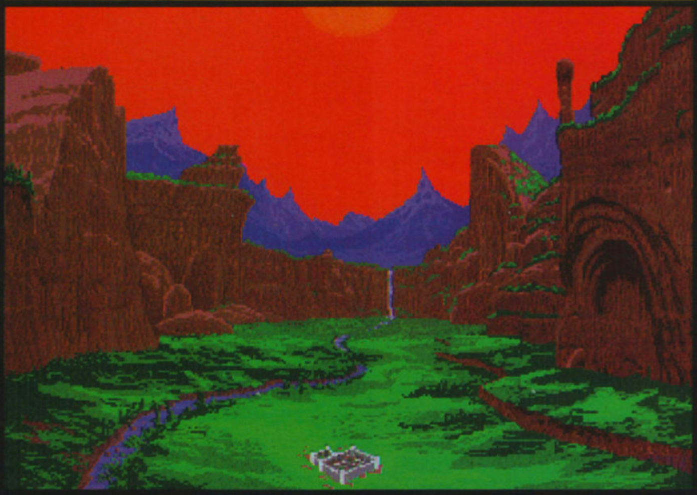
Arriving in a world where the sun never sets (aha...justification for the title methinks!) you are sent by the king to explore this new world and find a way home.

PLAYING A ROLE

Choosing three companions from a selection of warriors, clerics, dwarves, wizards and thieves you move out into the wilderness after purchasing suitable supplies from the castle stores. Weapons, armour and spells are all readily available for a price, as is transport. You begin the game with around 500 gold pieces and this can be added to by killing enemies and pinching all their loot.

The castle sits in the middle of a

The castle has been transported through a warp to this rather pleasant looking valley. It might look pretty but dangers await everywhere

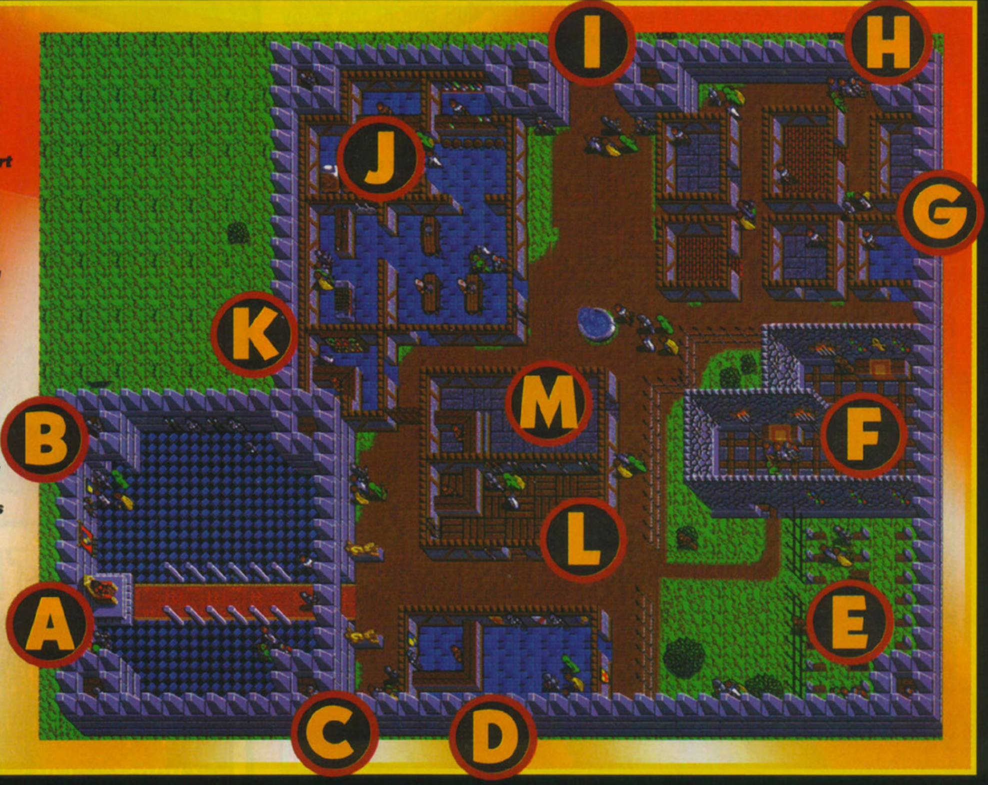


RELEASE DATE: US IMPORT • PRICE: £34.99

& DRAGONS

KING OF THE CASTLE

- **A** *The king sitting on his throne*
- **B** *Explore the towers by passing through the inside walls into a small 3D section of the game*
- **C** *The doorway to the king's court*
- **D** *The shop initially sells only leather armour. Later better armour is available*
- **E** *The graveyard where the dead warriors rest in peace*
- **F** *In the shrine your characters can be healed by the priests*
- **G** *The inhabitants of these houses will give advice*
- **H** *This tower can be explored to find extra bits of equipment*
- **I** *The gateway to the wilderness*
- **J** *In the inn you eat, drink and have a quick kip*
- **K** *In the magic shop are a variety of scrolls*
- **L** *The armoury where weapons can be bought*
- **M** *The caravan shop offers safe transport to remote areas*



valley in which numerous foul creatures dwell. Everything from hairy beastmen to vicious wild creatures roam the forests and swamps. Beyond the confines of the valley, through passages in the rock face lie caverns and dungeons.

FANTASY FIGHTING

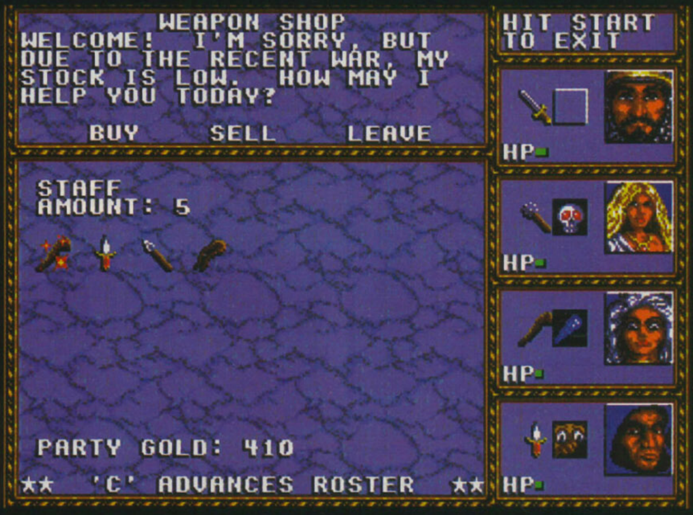
Control of your merry band is very simple, and compared to various other RPGs it is very responsive. Your group wanders around together until some form of combat is encountered. When confronted you have individual control over each character as you choose which of their weapons or spells are to be used.

Bashing baddies adds to experience points and as these rise, the character level also increases. The higher the character level, the more adept they are at using their chosen weapons or magical spells.

The presentation of D&D is both sharp and clear and very easy to understand. While many games of this style are confusing until you really immerse yourself into play, this is immediately accessible due to the simple controls.

Unfortunately, the sheer size of the land means that it is possible to roam around for ages without ever encountering anything. This can be

CONTINUED



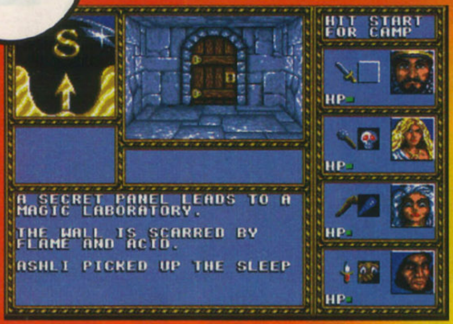
WEAPON SHOP
WELCOME! I'M SORRY, BUT DUE TO THE RECENT WAR, MY STOCK IS LOW. HOW MAY I HELP YOU TODAY?

STAFF
AMOUNT: 5

PARTY GOLD: 410

★★ 'C' ADVANCES ROSTER ★★

In the armoury you have a choice of weapons for your characters. As experience increases it is possible use more powerful items to protect yourself



HIT START FOR CAMP

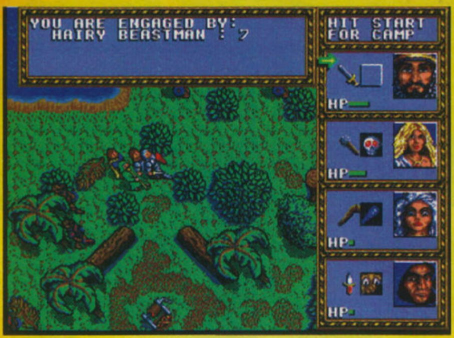
A SECRET PANEL LEADS TO A MAGIC LABORATORY.

THE WALL IS SCARRED BY FLAME AND ACID.

ASHLI PICKED UP THE SLEEP

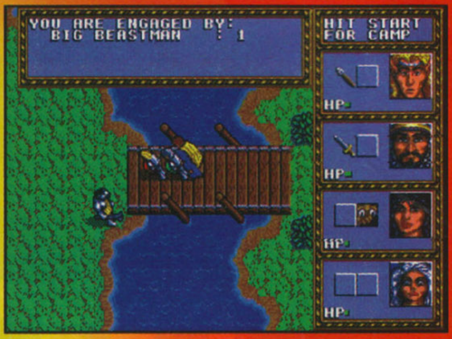
From the magic shop you can find a secret passage that leads you to one of the 3D sections of the game. In here you can collect articles that it's not possible to buy

You are attacked by beastmen from the north-west. At this point your group switches to individual control so they can attack or hide



YOU ARE ENGAGED BY:
HAIRY BEASTMAN : 2

HIT START FOR CAMP



YOU ARE ENGAGED BY:
BIG BEASTMAN : 1

HIT START FOR CAMP

Once across the bridge you encounter some rather unpleasant beasts which attempt to club you to death

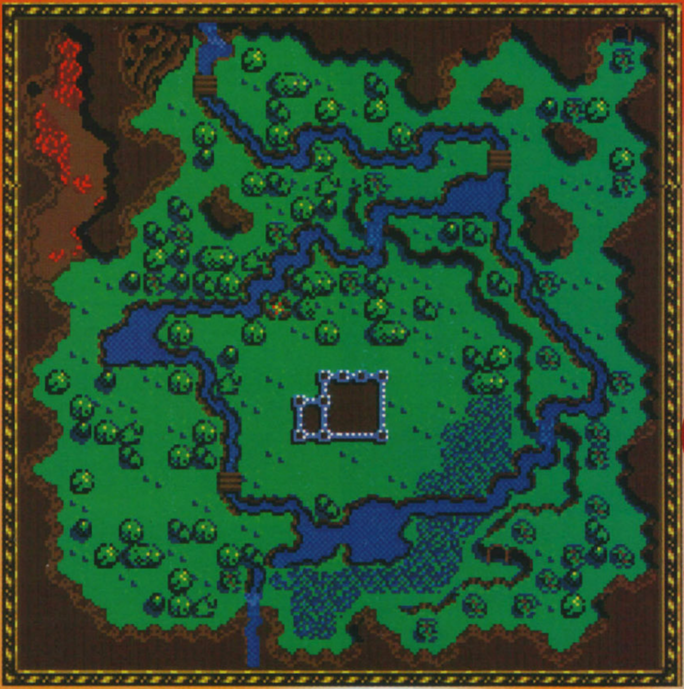
CONTINUED

excruciatingly boring at times and after a while it spoils what is otherwise a competent and well-produced game. I find this a great pity as the last thing you want to come up against in any game is your own boredom threshold!

To sum up, if you have the patience and you're really into the TSR range of adventures I can quite happily advise you to check this out. Unfortunately, if you like an adventure that is more focused or if you are a newcomer to the genre you may feel more comfortable with one of the many other excellent role-playing games which are available for the Mega Drive at the moment.

JOHN

Also included is a very useful auto-mapper which enables you to keep track of your location at any point during the game



MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

ROLE-PLAYING

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

65%

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	5
PLAYABILITY	6
DURABILITY	6

UPPERS

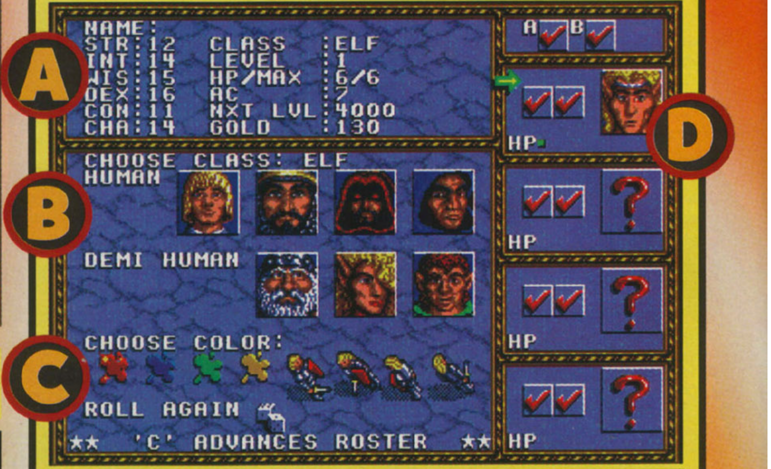
- *Simple controls*
- *Wide variety of puzzles and monsters*
- *Battery-backed save game facility*

DOWNERS

- *Large areas of nothing Can be a bit tedious*

Thanks to Megacom, 13 Mansfield Road, Nottingham for providing this game for review. Tel: (0602) 475151

CREATE YOURSELF



NAME:
STR:12 CLASS :ELF
INT:14 LEVEL :1
WIS:15 HP/MAX :6/6
DEX:16 AC :7
CON:11 NXT LVL:4000
CHA:14 GOLD :130

CHOOSE CLASS: ELF
HUMAN

DEMI HUMAN

CHOOSE COLOR:

ROLL AGAIN

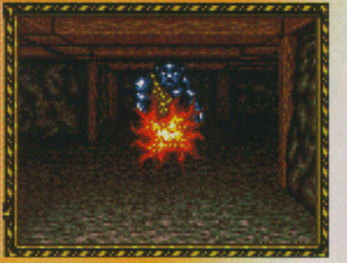
** 'C' ADVANCES ROSTER **

Ⓐ *The various stats of the character you are building. Wisdom, strength, dexterity, hit points and so on.*

Ⓑ *Choose what race your character is, and what profession he or she pursues*

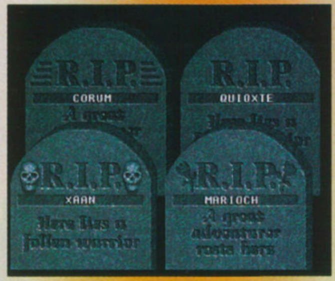
Ⓒ *The colour of your characters' clothes can be changed so they are easily recognisable*

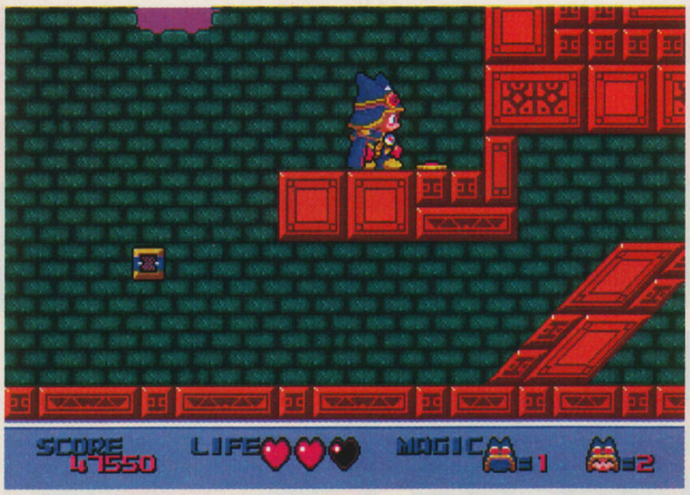
Ⓓ *Once all the player stats have been decided the character is placed in the relevant box over here on the right*



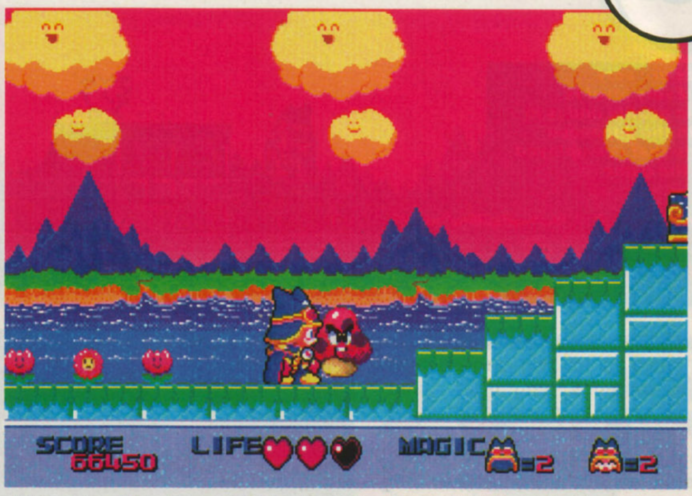
(Above) In the caverns to the north of the castle you encounter horrific monsters that make short work of your inexperienced band

(Below) Failure results in burial in the shrine graveyard. So load up again to have another bash!





Every now and then throughout the game you will come across switches that must be activated to open up further sections of the level. Here, knocking a switch causes an area of wall to fall over



When something is required for throwing all our little hero has to do is walk up to an object, thwack it one with a wand and then carry it along until there's an enemy to launch it at

MAGICAL TAROT

What is a Magical Tarot? I've spent a week with the thing and I can't work out what it's got to do with Tarot cards. Also is the hero a boy or girl? Arghhh!

REVIEW

As the asexual hero of the game, you have a certain degree of magical abilities. So powerful are you, that you are permitted to roam around wearing a ludicrous hat and a long cape, while waving a funny looking stick thing around.

Those of you familiar with just about any platform game will have a rough idea of how Magical Tarot plays. Move from level to level avoiding numerous hostile creatures, jumping over obstacles and finally heading towards a suitably large end-of-level guardian.

Here you will spend as long as it took to get through the rest of the level jumping over the guardian's projectiles while trying to slap the bad guy in the mush. Sound familiar? Of course it does.

The game begins with reams of Japanese messages coming from a suitably distressed looking duo who obviously want you mangle an unpleasant chap. So off you go, wand in hand, into what looks uncannily like a series of school rooms.

TWIRLY WHIRLY

Here you can lift fire extinguishers off the wall or waste-paper baskets off the floor and hurl them at the onslaught of fluffy, pink, bouncy things that hurtle along the corridors towards you.

Having worked through a number of these scrolling passageways you are set upon by a big bully who happens to have found himself a helicopter gunship!

Moving on, go through the playground where an ugly brute kicks footballs at you. Next cross the forest by jumping from tree to tree, being careful to avoid witches, bats, psychotic monkeys, giraffes and finally Dracula!

Even though your magic wand comes in useful as a close-range clubbing tool

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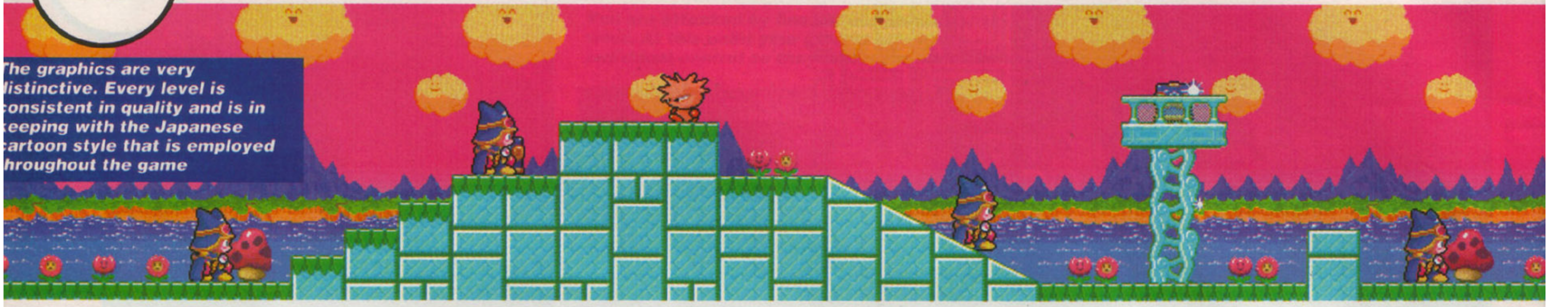
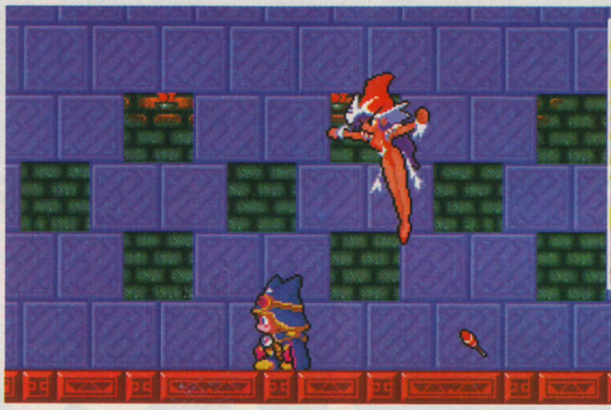


he graphics are very istinctive. Every level is onsistent in quality and is in eeping with the Japanese artoon style that is employed hroughout the game

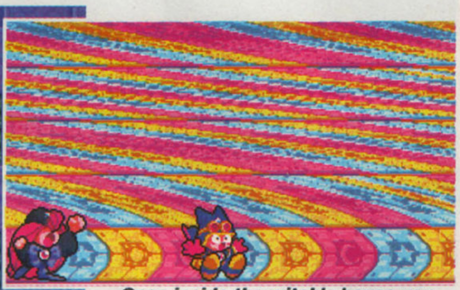
CONTINUED

and the various bits of scenery are wonderful for long-range lobbing weapons, you often need something with a bit more zing! Sure enough, along the way is a choice of spells to use. Initially there's an invulnerability spell that can be used to make those sticky situations a little easier. Later on, having clubbed a wicked witch senseless you have the option to use her powers as a form of smart bomb. Neat huh?

Weapons aren't the only thing that our resourceful little hero has to discover. Flight is possible using a Batmanesque cape. Leaping into the air and holding down the jump button causes the loony looking cape to stretch out to form a hang-glider. Very useful for reaching those all-important objects that are located in the most out of the way places!



I've never seen an end-of-level guardian before that's basically a naked woman jumping around wearing nothing more than a Santa hat! The kinky Japanese sense of humour is getting worse!



Once inside the witch's house you will find not only a reasonably difficult guardian, but also a very impressive graphical effect similar to the fire in Thunderforce III

NOVELTY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

One of the most noticeable features of Magical Tarot is that it's completely different from anything else you will have seen before. The variety in monsters and guardians is utterly ludicrous! One moment you'll be doing battle with Dracula and the next you'll be jumping over giraffes while monkeys lob rotten apples at you!

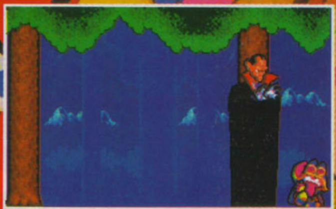
Each of the five levels has a very different style and it is this that helps to make the game so addictive. There's nothing like sheer curiosity to make you want to get that little bit further.

In terms of presentation, this is your typical high quality Japanese cartoon-style product. The sprites are all very well animated and there are some wonderful parallax scrolling effects on just about every level. All of the graphics although not superbly drawn are distinctive and colourful, with some very clever little touches appearing from time to time.

I must mention the sound at this point. While the tunes are all very bouncy and twee, the sampled sounds that erupt from your speakers from time to time are utterly abysmal. The game is not without its faults. The first few levels are very easy to get through while all the sections beyond stage three are extremely difficult. I would prefer a more gradual progression in difficulty which would ease the player into the harder sections.

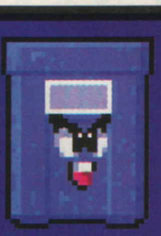
As it stands, if you're patient and persistent you'll be OK, but the more temperamental among you will no doubt get thoroughly pissed off with suddenly reaching a seemingly impassable obstruction.

At present this game is available on Japanese import only and as a



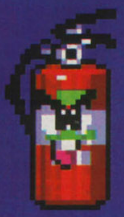
Beyond the woods the game changes style somewhat. Here you must jump from cloud to cloud avoiding monkeys and giraffes. Hmm, very weird!

A HELPING HAND



BERTIE BIN

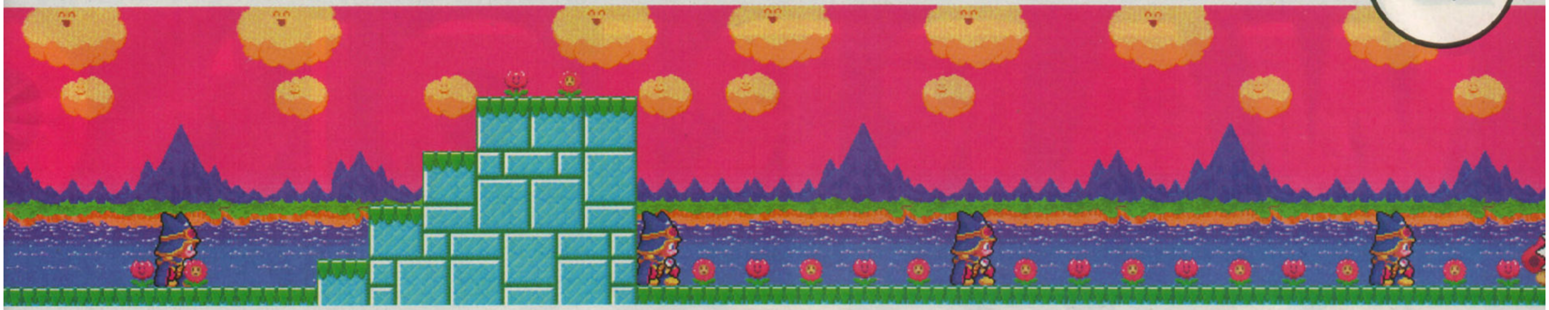
A heavyweight throwing weapon



FREDDIE FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Fred will knock down multiple monsters in one go

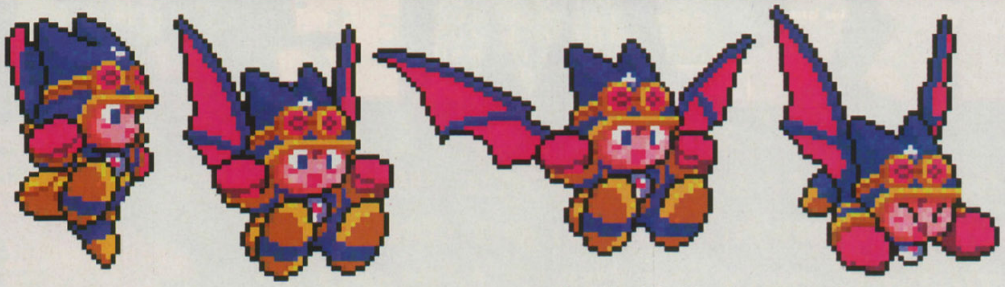
RELEASE DATE: JAPANESE IMPORT • PRICE: £39.99



result is limited to SCART based machines. So you can play this on a Japanese Mega Drive where the PAL modulator has been disabled, a UK Mega Drive or a US Genesis that has been modified by a retailer such as Megacom.

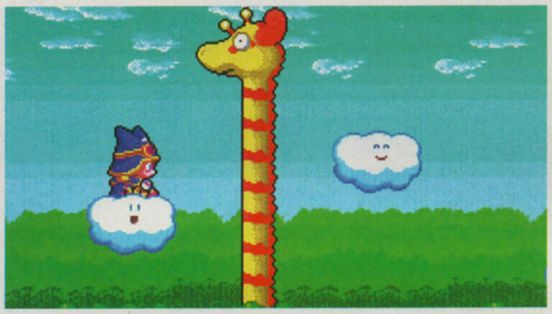
If your machine isn't one of the above then the first four stages are fine, but the very last end-of-level guardian is corrupted due to a complicated graphics mode employed by the programmers. If you don't have a modified Mega Drive you'll have to wait for the US or UK version to be released later this year.

JOHN

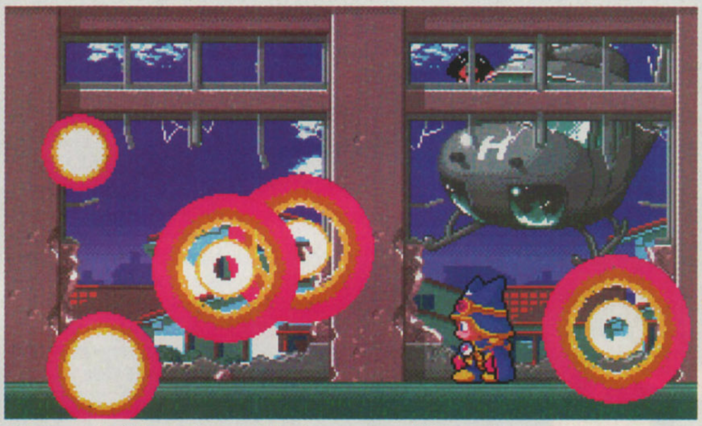


TAKE FLIGHT!

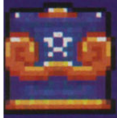
Leaping into the air and snapping out your cape means you can glide gracefully along for a short distance. This is particularly handy for getting through those small gaps!



Beyond the woods the game changes style somewhat. Here you must jump from cloud to cloud avoiding monkeys and giraffes



At the end of the series of school rooms you'll be set upon by a psychopath in a helicopter gunship. Not your everyday occurrence, but believe me it's a lot easier to overcome than it looks



BRIAN BOX
Whacking Bri will often result in a small goody being produced. This could be anything from more magical power to extra health

GRAHAM GUN
Pick him up off Tommy's back and use him to blow away the bad guys

TOMMY TRUNDLER
First found joined to Graham the Gun, Tommy will help you trundle across the spiky areas of the levels

BILLY BUCKET
A small, retiring weapon found throughout the first level

TERRY TREE STUMP
Terry likes nothing better than to be thrown at the perils of the forest

MARTIN MUSHROOM
Uproot Martin and use him to bludgeon the oncoming meanies to death

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

PLATFORM

MAGICAL TAROT

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE 77%

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	5
PLAYABILITY	7
DURABILITY	6

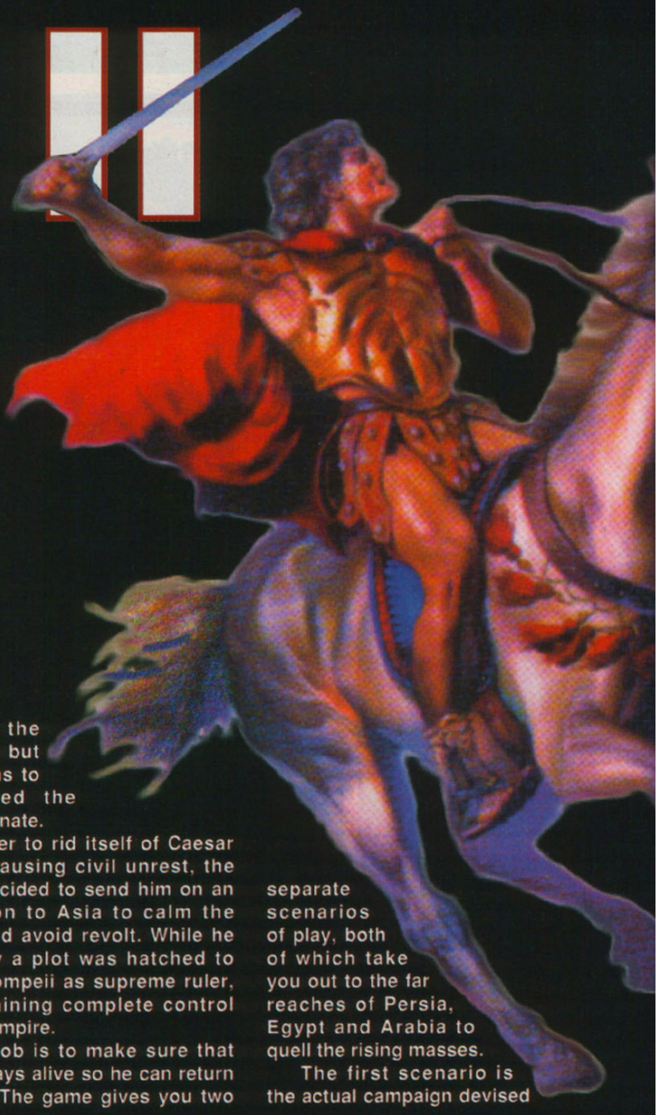
UPPERS

- Good-looking graphics
- Novel ideas
- Tremendous variety in style

DOWNERS

- Starts off too easy and gets very hard
- You can only play up to stage four unless you have a SCART machine

WARRIOR ROME II



In the past the strategic war simulation has been an area enjoyed only by those blessed with immense tolerance. Now, thanks to Micronet even those really lacking in patience can join in the excitement of these tactical feasts.

REVIEW

Gone are the days of wargames that take three weeks to complete, we are in a new age now. One which is inspired by high-speed blasting, where people want the blood and guts with the least amount of fuss.

This new wave of strategy games has been on the way for a while. Starting on the Amiga a couple of years ago, games like Powermonger and Mega lo Mania (something we can look forward to on the Mega Drive soon) took the public by storm due to their novel blend of strategy and role-playing.

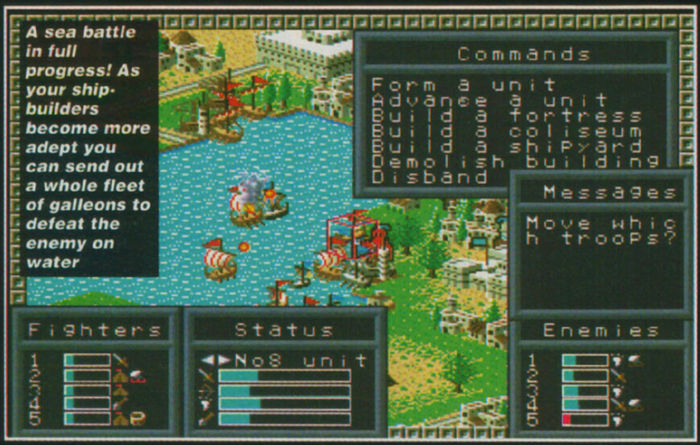
MILITARY GENIUS

Warrior of Rome, as you would expect, is a game set in the traumatic period of the Roman Empire. You must take on the role of the ever-popular Julius Caesar, a man considered to be quite a lad among the populace, but who seems to have irked the Roman Senate.

In order to rid itself of Caesar without causing civil unrest, the Senate decided to send him on an expedition to Asia to calm the people and avoid revolt. While he was away a plot was hatched to instate Pompeii as supreme ruler, thus regaining complete control over the Empire.

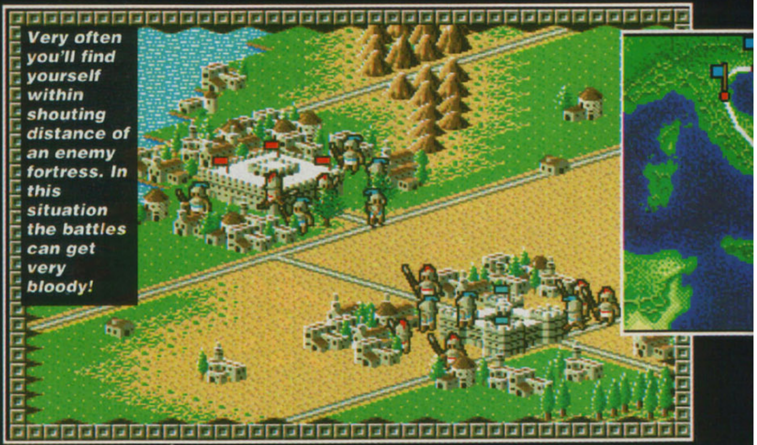
Your job is to make sure that Caesar stays alive so he can return to Rome. The game gives you two separate scenarios of play, both of which take you out to the far reaches of Persia, Egypt and Arabia to quell the rising masses.

The first scenario is the actual campaign devised



Move which troops?

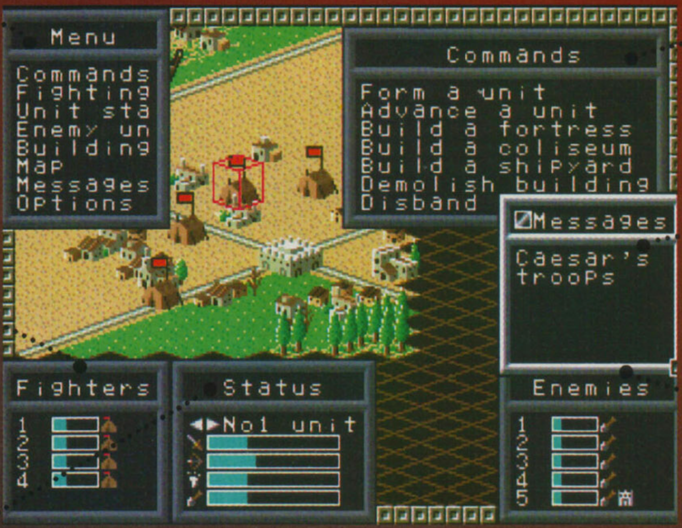
A sea battle in full progress! As your ship-builders become more adept you can send out a whole fleet of galleons to defeat the enemy on water



Very often you'll find yourself within shouting distance of an enemy fortress. In this situation the battles can get very bloody!

OF

THE MENU SIR?


Menu
Commands
Fighting
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Enemy un
Building
Map
Messages
Options
Commands
Form a unit
Advance a unit
Build a fortress
Build a coliseum
Build a shipyard
Demolish building
Disband
Messages
Caesar's troops
Fighters
1
2
3
4
Status
No1 unit
Enemies
1
2
3
4
5

The main menu: *Simply pointing and clicking will call up any of the other windows*

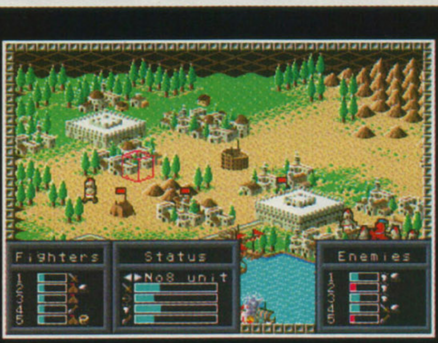
Commands: *This is where you choose which of your platoons does what, and when*

Messages: *Any important pieces of information will displayed in this window*

Fighter stats: *Keep track of how well you're doing by using these easy to read bar charts*

Enemy stats: *Show you how well the enemy is doing*

Unit stats: *These let you know how well a unit is progressing in terms of skill as it becomes more experienced*


Fighters
Status
No8 unit
Enemies

As your village grows the fortress expands to deal with the increasing population. As this happens you have more people from which to draw your troops

by the Senate. Here you have to work through a campaign with a total of 15 different areas. Here you're to destroy all of the enemy strongholds. The second has you choosing just one out of 20 areas in which to hone your combat skills.

Whatever scenario you choose, the gameplay is identical. Games begin with both your forces and the enemy encamped at opposite ends of an area. Each has a fortress around which lies a settlement. As the village grows, so does the fortress and thus you have more available people with which to build up your troops.

Soldiers can be sent out to attack the enemy or to build fortresses, shipyards or colosseums which not only work as effective barricades to keep out the heathens, but also have distinct purposes of their own.

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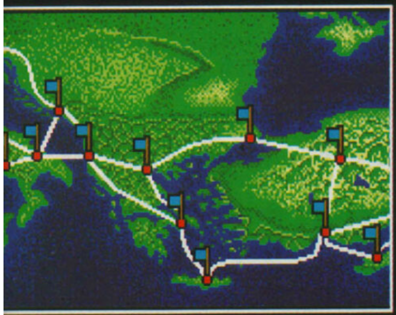
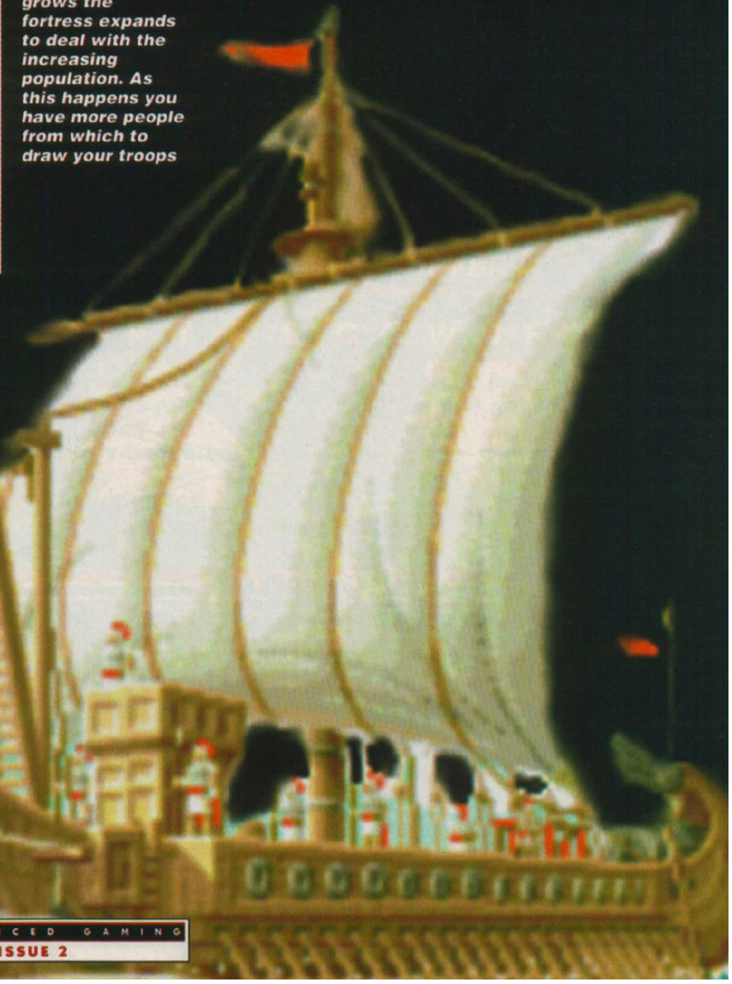


The campaign set by the Senate means you have to move throughout the Middle East, capturing each of these flags along the way



CONTINUED

As you can probably guess, the fortress acts as both a focal point for your town and as a stronghold to ensure that at least some of your men are safe.

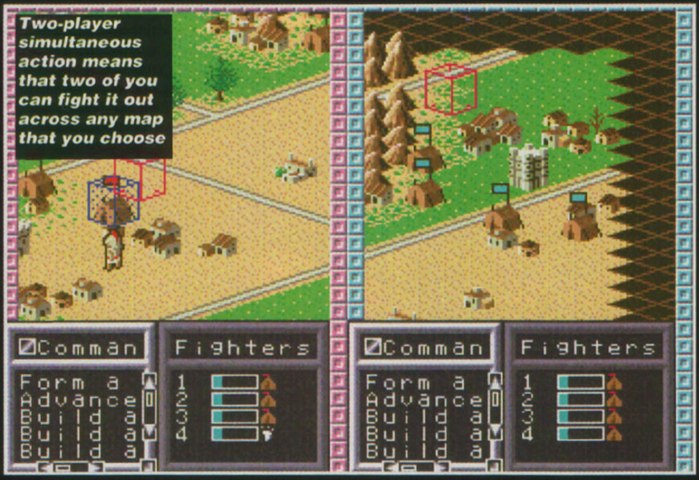
The shipyard, surprise, surprise, allows you to build ships with which to attack the enemy. The colosseum, once built can be used to train up your men. As your town expands you must let it creep across the land to overpower the opposition.

WINDOWS TO THE PAST

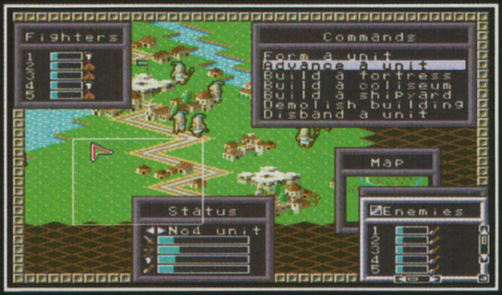
What sets Warrior of Rome II apart from many other tactical games on the Mega Drive is the novel control method.

Utilising a series of menus, inspired by the desktop systems on machines like the Macintosh or Amiga, the game is totally controlled by layer after layer of menus and sub-menus.

Any of these, in true Mac style, can be resized and placed wherever you want on the screen to make your life as easy as possible. It's an idea that I've not seen before on the Mega Drive, and I hope that other developers are suitably inspired by its very sensible approach.


Comman
Form a
Advance
Build a
Build a
Build a
Fighters
1
2
3
4
Comman
Form a
Advance
Build a
Build a
Build a
Fighters
1
2
3
4

Two-player simultaneous action means that two of you can fight it out across any map that you choose

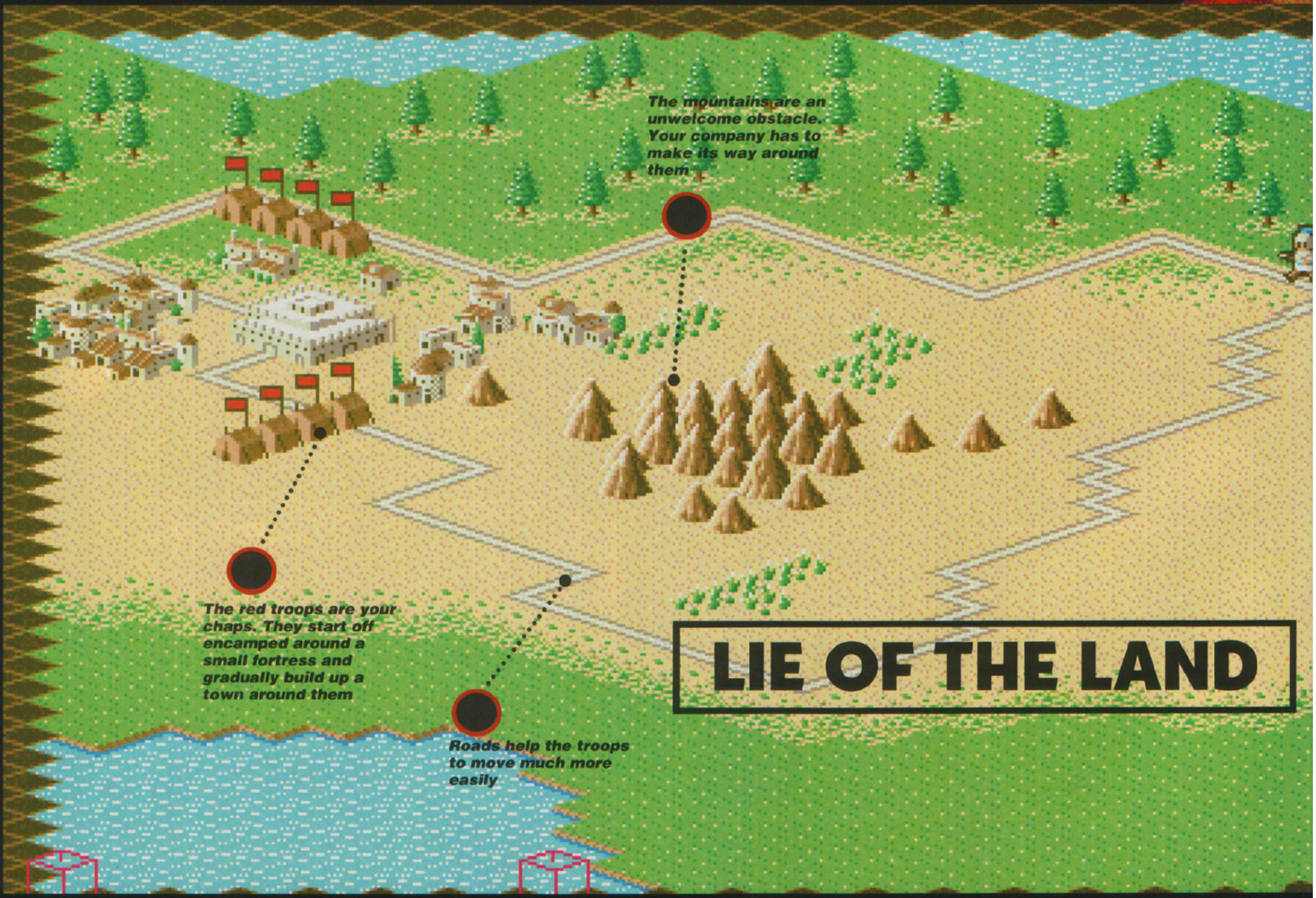

Fighters
1
2
3
4
5
Commands
Form a unit
Advance a unit
Build a fortress
Build a coliseum
Build a shipyard
Demolish building
Disband a unit
Map
Status
No4 unit
Enemies
1
2
3
4
5

Windows can be moved and resized in any way so you can have all the info you want on screen. Alternatively you can choose to be more selective

To take this windows method one stage further, the game can be enjoyed by two players simultaneously using a split screen layout that allows one player to take the part of Caesar and the other to play the Eastern opposition.

With the tremendous number of options, along with this excellent control method, I have to say that this is one of the most compelling games I have yet seen on the Mega Drive. Although not normally a fan of war games, I found myself playing this time after time for sheer enjoyment.

Graphically it's well drawn, clear and colourful. The isometric layout of the screen is very well implemented, and although it doesn't



LIE OF THE LAND

The mountains are an unwelcome obstacle. Your company has to make its way around them

The red troops are your chaps. They start off encamped around a small fortress and gradually build up a town around them

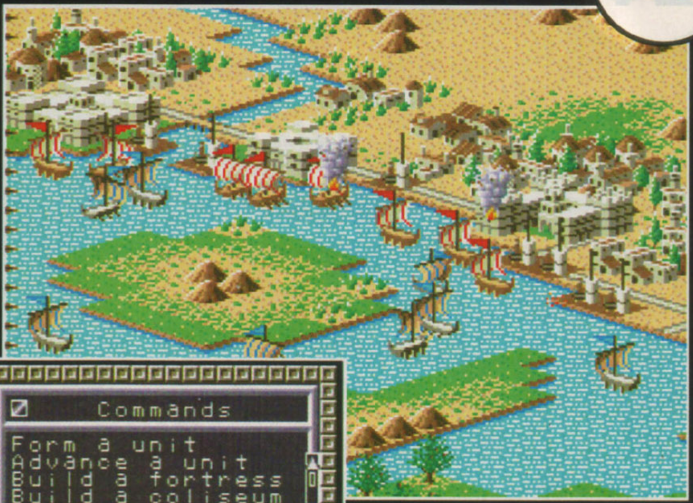
Roads help the troops to move much more easily

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW • PRICE: £39.95

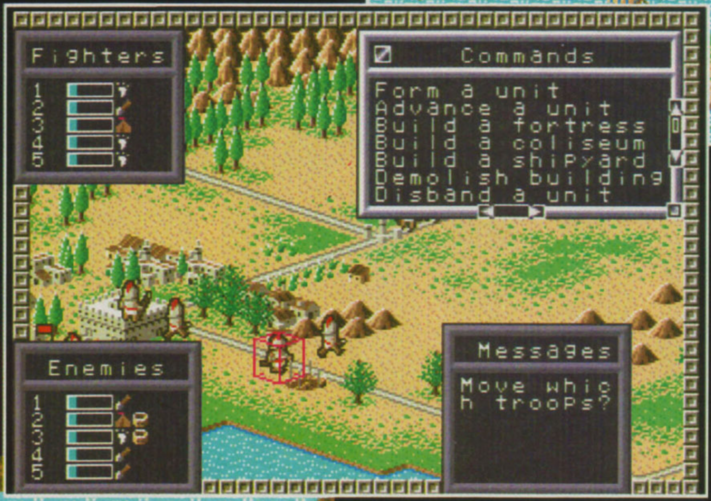
scroll particularly smoothly, there can be no doubt that it's one of the best games of its type.

Sonically the game is also very good including a large number of suitably Romanesque themes with trumpet fanfares and military marching drums. Those of you who remember the music to Chelmsford 123 on the telly will have an idea of what I mean!

Overall I can safely say that Warrior of Rome II is superb. If you are sick and tired of shoot'em-ups, beat'em-ups or platform games, then this could well be the cartridge you have been looking for.



When you've really built things up you can make a full naval assault on the opposition. Ships are everywhere and fireballs are flying from deck to deck


Fighters
1
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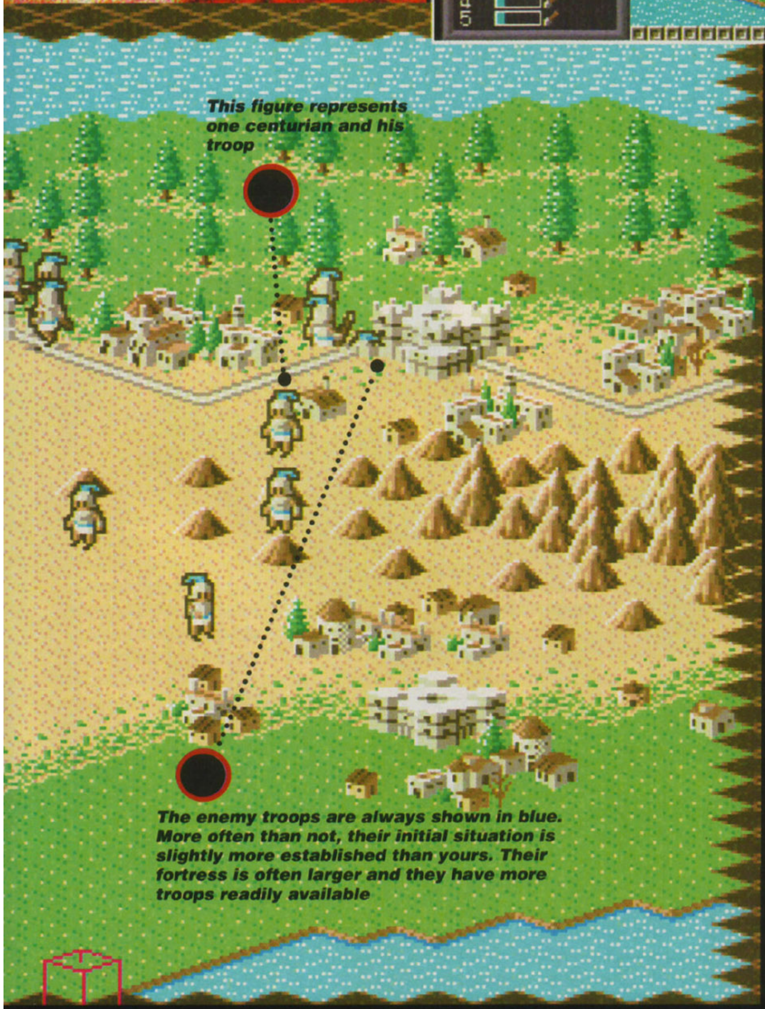
Commands
Form a unit
Advance a unit
Build a fortress
Build a coliseum
Build a shipyard
Demolish building
Disband a unit
Enemies
1
2
3
4
5
Messages

Move whic
h troops?

Set your men to build up a colosseum so your troops can train quickly. Experience does them good, but bung 'em in here and they get better very quickly



This figure represents one centurian and his troop

The enemy troops are always shown in blue. More often than not, their initial situation is slightly more established than yours. Their fortress is often larger and they have more troops readily available

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

STRATEGY

WARRIOR OF ROME II

ONE/TWO PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

88%

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
PLAYABILITY	8
DURABILITY	9

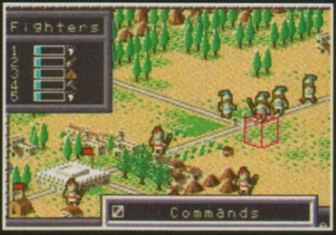
UPPERS

- Superb control method
- Enormous number of scenarios
- Battery-backed save facility
- Clear graphics
- Novel approach to war gaming

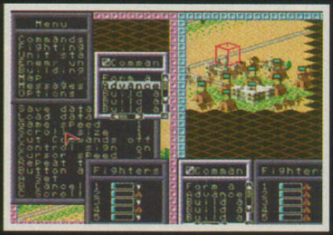
DOWNERS

- Scrolling is jerky
- Screen can get too cluttered

Thanks to Megacom, 13 Mansfield Road, Nottingham for supplying this game. Tel: (0602) 475151.

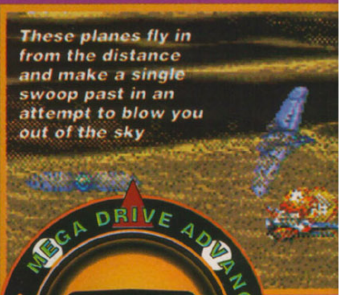

Fighters
Commands

Often you'll find yourself in a close battle. This is the only time where it is hard to see which troops are doing what


Menu
Command
Fighters

The biggest problem with a two-player game is that your half of the screen can get a little cluttered with all the windows!

The fourth offering in the Thunder Force saga is a game which pushes the Mega Drive to its limits. With amazing graphics, superb sound and the most incredible use of parallax scrolling it is definitely the best thing since sliced bread.



These planes fly in from the distance and make a single swoop past in an attempt to blow you out of the sky

THUNDER FORCE IV

REVIEW

Every now and then there are games that leave everyone utterly gob-smacked. In the world of the platform game Sonic produced the desired effect some while ago, as did Taz-Mania more recently.

However, with the enormous number of shoot'em-ups available it is hard to decide which ones really deserve to be considered as classics of the genre.

TIME TRAVEL

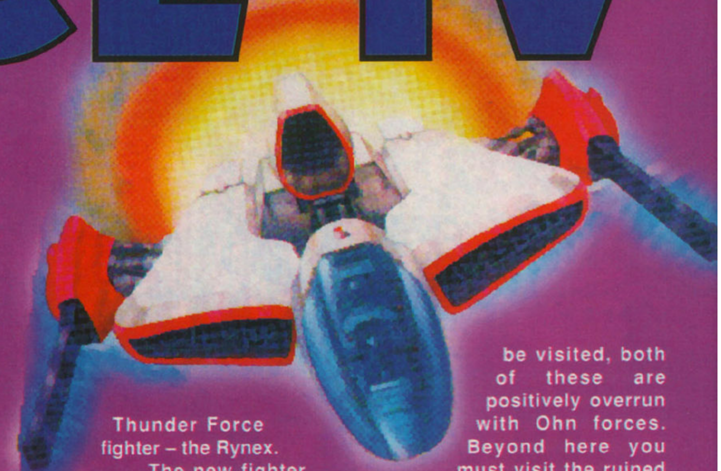
Many feel that Thunder Force III was one of the greatest blasts of all time. Graphically it was head and shoulders above much of the competition and it was one of the first games to break the mould in terms of ideas.

That was two years ago though, and in the past few months alone there have been numerous games that have really pushed the blast'em concept to the limits. Gley Lancer, reviewed elsewhere in this issue is certainly a game that stretches the boundaries somewhat.

Enter Thunder Force IV, without a doubt the most thrilling and sexy game to appear on the Mega Drive – ever. So what is so special about it then?

The 10 huge levels abound with massive guardians and intelligent aliens that chase you through the heavens. Gorgeous backgrounds and enormous sprites all enhanced by the most stunning use of parallax ever seen on the 16-bit Sega. Thumping soundtracks and sampled sound effects drive the game along, while digitised speech warns of dangers that lie ahead.

All your favourite parts of the previous games are present. The stunning array of bolt-on weaponry has not changed. You still have the hunters, rail lasers, free way missiles and laser guns, but all of this is now added to the latest Thunder Force fighter – the Rynex.



The new fighter is faster and more powerful than ever before and is the only machine advanced enough to help you defeat the Ohn Empire that has set up base on the distant planet of Aquaria.

DISTANT THUNDER

Set in two separate sections, the game begins with four preliminary levels that can be accessed in any order by use of a simple mission control screen.

Strite and the desert world of Daser are the first planets that must be visited, both of these are positively overrun with Ohn forces. Beyond here you must visit the ruined space city and then disable the airborne forces of the Ohn air raid before making the hyperwarp to the Aquaria system.

After reaching Aquaria you will be temporarily joined by a fleet of Thunder Force craft which will aid your strike attack. Before leaving you to go on alone, the ships will help re-equip your craft, making it suitable for the Aquarian atmosphere.

The surface of Aquaria is, as the name suggests, almost totally water and so

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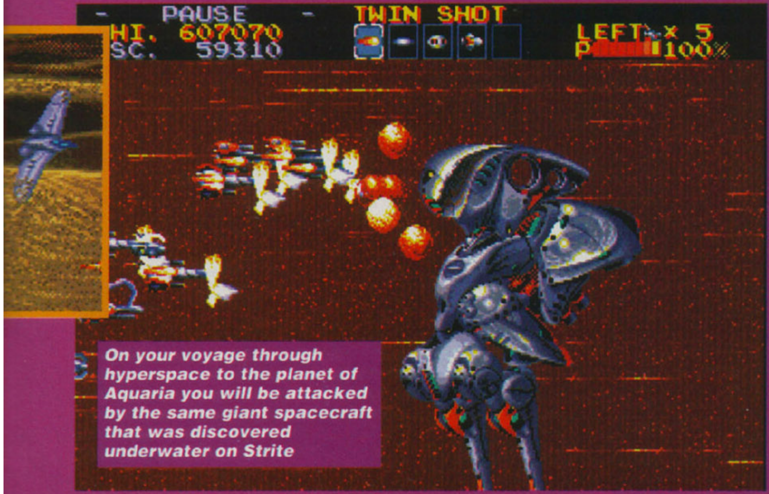
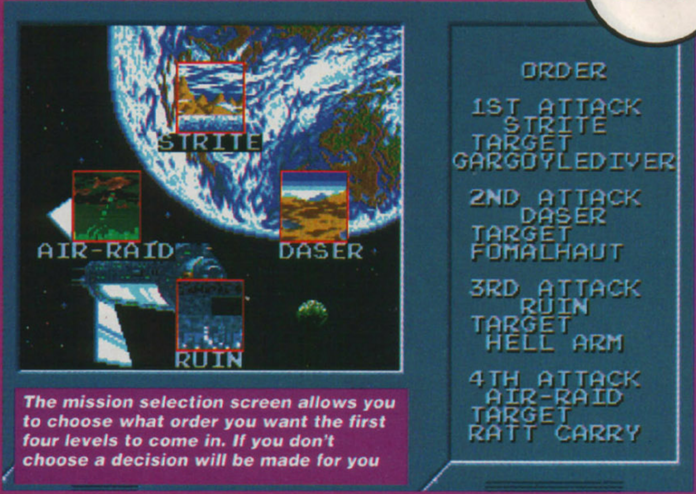


On your voyage through hyperspace to the planet of Aquaria you will be attacked by the same giant spacecraft that was discovered underwater on Strite



ORDER

1ST ATTACK
STRITE
TARGET
GARGOYLEDIVER

2ND ATTACK
DASER
TARGET
FOMALHAUT

3RD ATTACK
RUIN
TARGET
HELL ARM

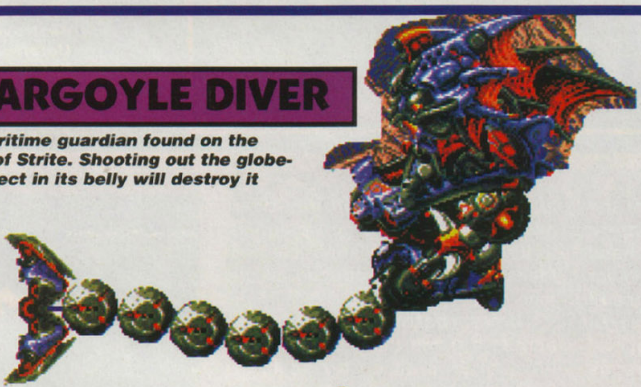
4TH ATTACK
AIR-RAID
TARGET
RATT CARRY

The mission selection screen allows you to choose what order you want the first four levels to come in. If you don't choose a decision will be made for you

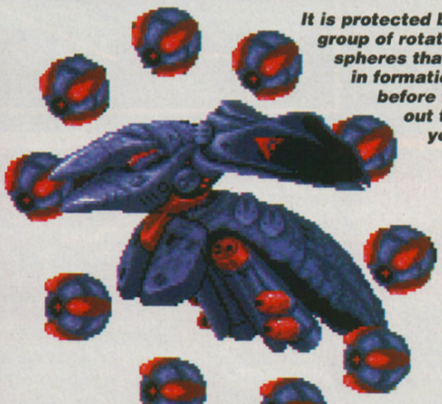
THUNDERING FORCE

GARGOYLE DIVER

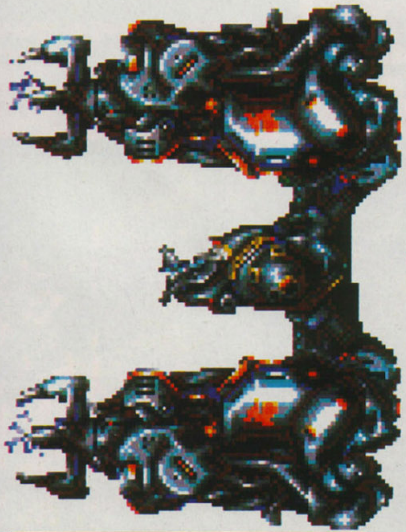
The maritime guardian found on the planet of Strite. Shooting out the globe-like object in its belly will destroy it



FORMALHAUT

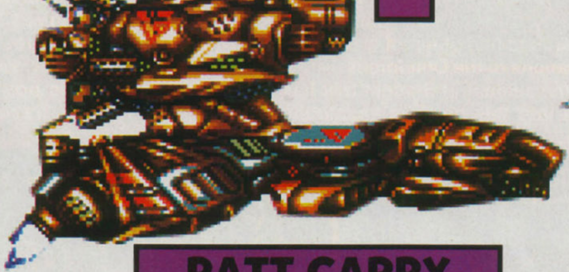


It is protected by a group of rotating spheres that spin in formation before flying out to get you



HELL ARM

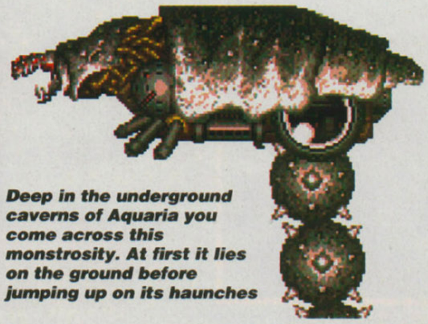
This one is a rather nasty piece of work in that it keeps attacking even after you've blown chunks off it



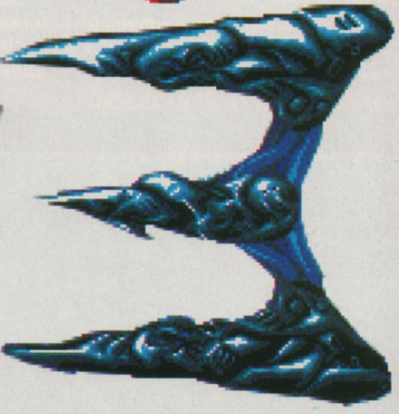
RATT CARRY

This must be shot both from behind and in front before it can be destroyed

ROCK MONSTER



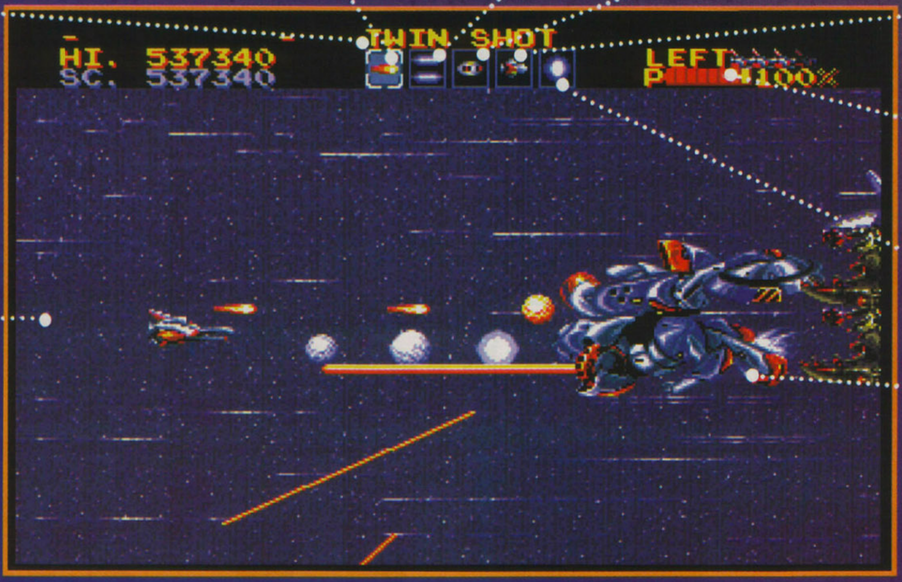
Deep in the underground caverns of Aquaria you come across this monstrosity. At first it lies on the ground before jumping up on its haunches



HELL ARM II

The first major guardian of Aquaria is very similar in design to the hell arm. It also attacks in the same manner and must be blown into several pieces

THUNDER 'N' LIGHTNING



Standard forward firing weapon

The rail gun

Snake missiles

This icon displays the free way missiles

The message box shows what weapon is currently activated. As you change weapons it lets you know what it is that you're using

The thrust of the Rynex can be changed to increase the manoeuvrability of the ship

This funny white blob shows the hunter shots

The unmodified Rynex does not have the extra tail section that allows it to activate the more advanced weapons

This mid-level guardian must be blown into several pieces before it can be destroyed. Unfortunately it has a nasty habit of firing these massive lasers at you!

CONTINUED

the initial part of the attack will take place underwater. From here the action moves deep underground among the lava filled passageways of the planet where strange mutated creatures dwell alongside the robotic monstrosities of the Ohn.

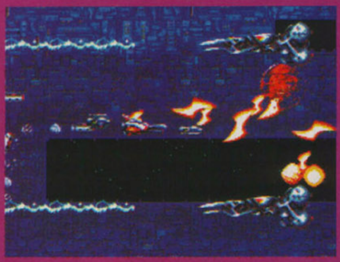
IT'S A MONSTER

Modern shoot'em-ups are renowned for the sheer number of bad guys that home in on the unsuspecting space pilot, but this is ridiculous! Every section of the game introduces new and more imaginative creatures that chase you around the skies. Unlike other games though, in Thunder Force IV they have even more space in which to come and get you. Not only is each level many screens long, but it is also about three screens high. This means that as you fly along you can move upwards to find different waves and formations of the Ohn forces.

The amount of thought that has gone into this game is absolutely astounding. No detail has been missed, and even as you progress to further levels you'll find that new ideas are being introduced all the time.

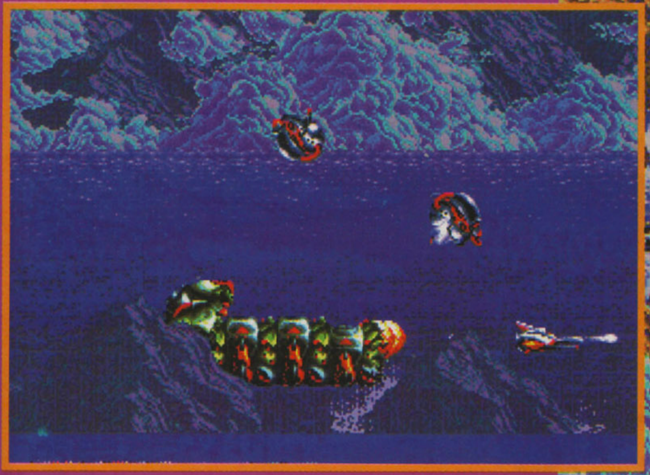
Never before have I come across a game that can keep the level of tension up for so long! Since its arrival in the office, rarely has there been a moment where someone isn't playing it.

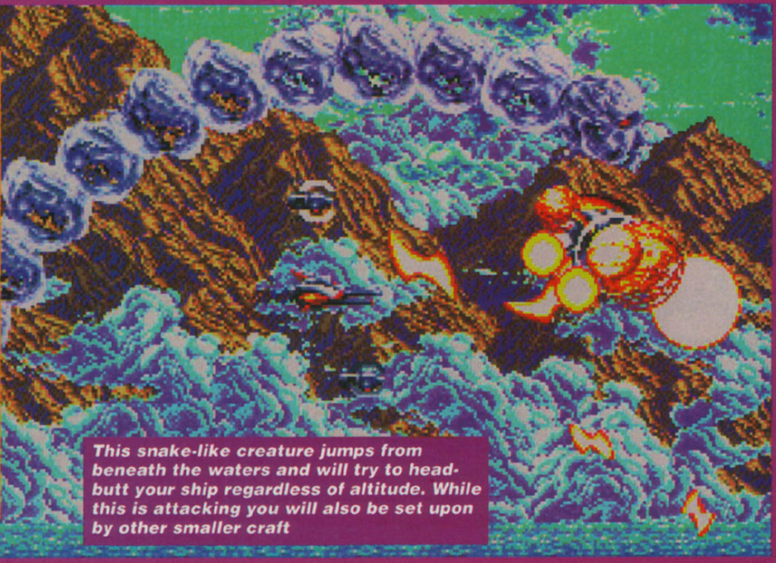
One thing to note, this is certainly a game for seasoned blast'em freaks. It's not an easy game, so if you haven't got



Attacks don't always come from in front! Very often you'll be visited from above, behind and below. Usually all at once!

The mid-level guardian on Strite can only be attacked using your rear firing weapons. Eek





This snake-like creature jumps from beneath the waters and will try to head-butt your ship regardless of altitude. While this is attacking you will also be set upon by other smaller craft

RELEASE DATE: IMPORT ONLY • PRICE: £39.99

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

SHOOT'EM-UP

THUNDER FORCE IV

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

94%

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
PLAYABILITY	9
DURABILITY	8

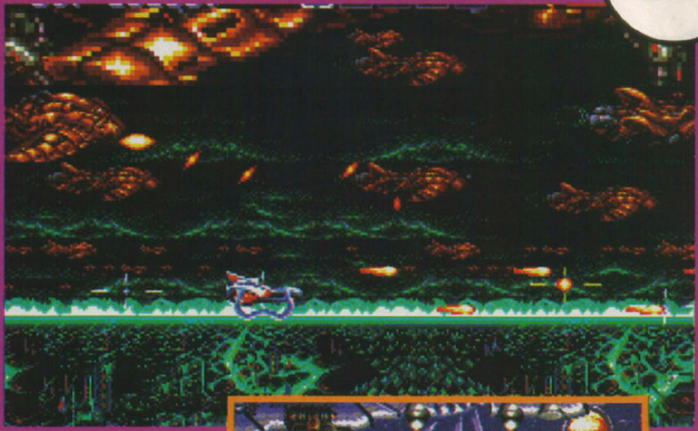
UPPERS

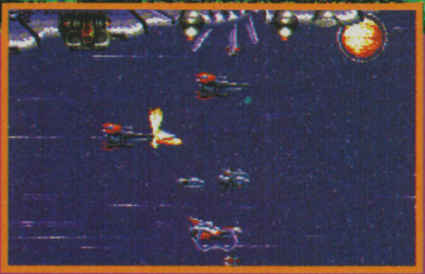
- *Amazing graphics*
- *Superb quality sound*
- *Incredibly addictive*
- *Best ever use of parallax in Mega Drive Enormous well animated sprites*

DOWNERS

- *Can be a bit hard if you're not a well-seasoned gamesplayer*

Thanks to Megacom, 13 Mansfield Road, Nottingham for supplying this game.
Tel: (0602) 475151.

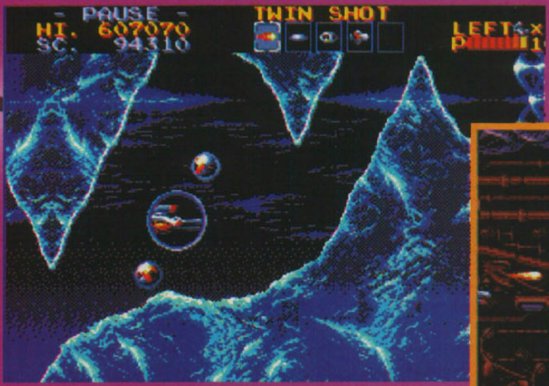




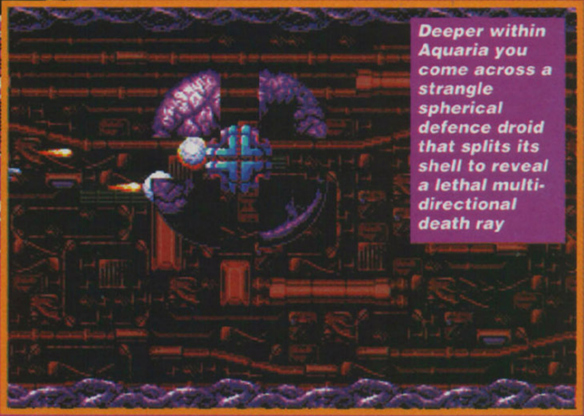
When trying to foil the Ohn air raid attempt you will have to stay out of their sights as their guns try to track you

On the journey you'll be helped by a couple of other Thunder Force ships which'll knock out a few of the enemy defences for you

incredibly quick reactions you're going to struggle a bit. However, despite this, I feel inclined to recommend this game above all other shoot'em-ups on the Mega Drive. It is more than worthy successor to its predecessors.



The first level is almost entirely underwater and you'll come across a number of very small twisty-turny passages

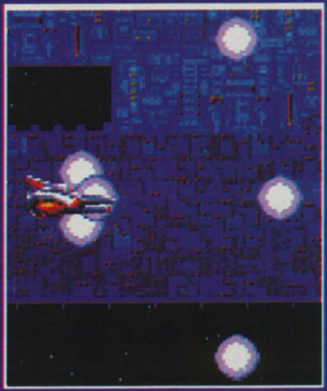


Deeper within Aquaria you come across a strangle spherical defence droid that splits its shell to reveal a lethal multi-directional death ray

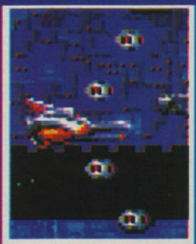
NOTE: The game is only available on Japanese import and as a result will only work on a Japanese (or converted UK or US) Mega Drive. Consult your dealer to find out what you need to run this game. Alternatively, it probably won't be long until the official UK release.

ALIENSBANE

HUNTER



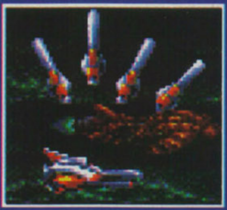
An effective homing weapon that fires three bolts at a time



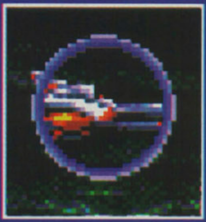
SNAKE

Small thermonuclear devices that fire both up and down from the Rynex

FREE WAY



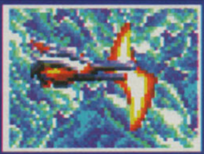
These missiles fire in the opposite direction to the motion of the craft



SHIELD

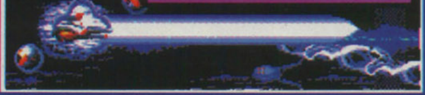
This can withstand a number of hits before it wears down

BLADE



A replacement for the basic forward firing weapon. Very powerful

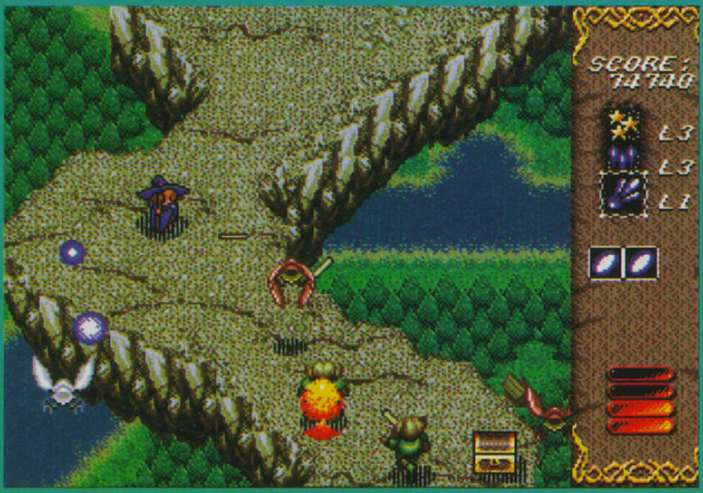
SUPERCLAW



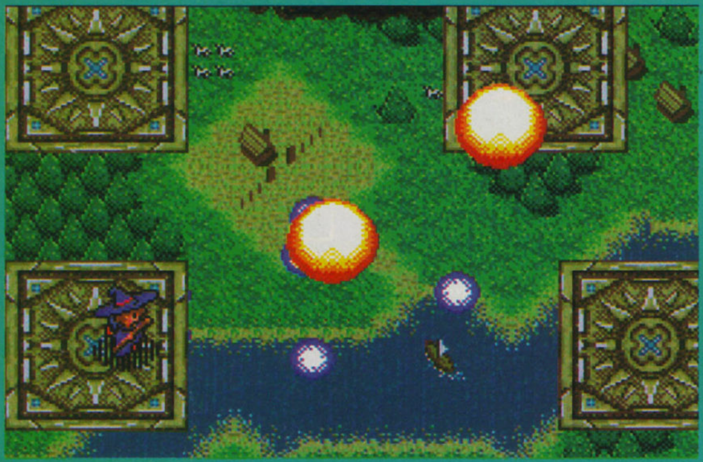
This weapon revolves around the enhanced Rynex and charges up while the main guns are not being fired. When fully charged it is the most powerful weapon in the game

TW
TA

The thought of another shoot'em-up winging its way onto my desk was enough to send me gibbering to the job centre. That was until I was tied to a chair to find out if this one would stand out from the crowd.



Rejoin the battle in level two on a shaky natural bridge high above the ground



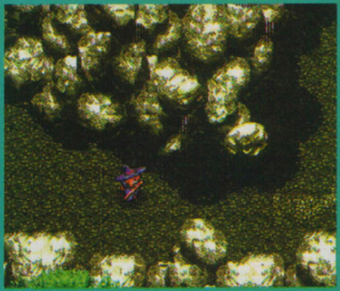
Moving platforms make things even more difficult, especially when flocks of vicious birds mob you

REVIEW

At first Twinkle Tale looks very similar to Undeadline. It shares the sub-Gauntlet style of that game – walking over open ground and through buildings. Similarly the power-ups in Twinkle Tale are concealed in chests. Undeadline was good, but a clone so soon?

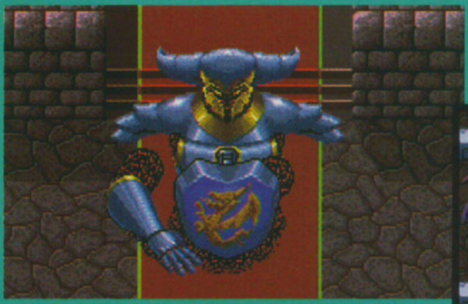
With trepidation I sat down and began to play. This is a simple game; the female character has only three weapons at her disposal along with two different kinds of magic.

A weapon can only be powered up twice, by picking up the stars hidden in the chests. Collect six stars and all your weapons will be fully powered up. Magic comes in

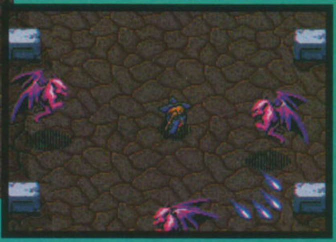


Poor old Twinkie is about to be crushed by a cascade of falling boulders

WINKLE
ALE



(Above) The first end-of-level guardian. Hit the blue jewel on its chest when it's uncovered



Four of these gargoyles swirl and swoop making it difficult to shoot them. Try and concentrate on one at a time

either 'large pillars of flame-style', or your more futuristic 'swirling globes of plasma'. This is found, one spell at a time, in the chests. Unfortunately only three spells can be carried at once.

HUNKY-DORY

Health begins with three hit points, one being added each time a level is completed. These are marked by orange bars at the side of the screen and every time the character gets hit a point is lost. A power level is also removed from the weapon in use. Soon enough a chest will turn up containing a health potion, a star or some magic. The chests only ever hold one item.

So Twinkle Tale is a simple incarnation of the shoot'em-up genre. Variety comes from the diverse nature of the enemies including sinister spirit shadows, giddying gargoyles, bludgeoning boulders malevolent moss and many other nasties. The majority just require rapid shooting, relying on sheer weight of numbers to overwhelm you. Some do however, perform characteristic behaviour patterns.

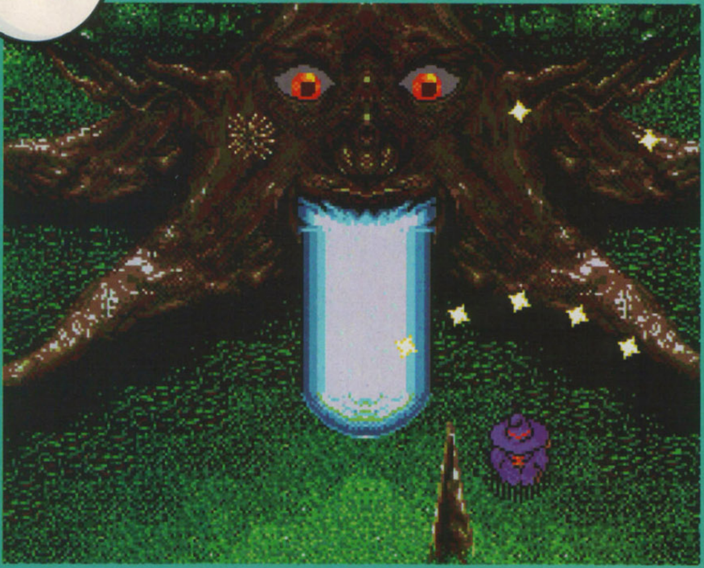
Each of the levels has its special creatures that behave very differently from one another and they can be looked on as mid-level guardians. The higher the level the more of these appear. There will be new ones later in the game, but old favourites do reappear.

TAKE THAT AND THAT...

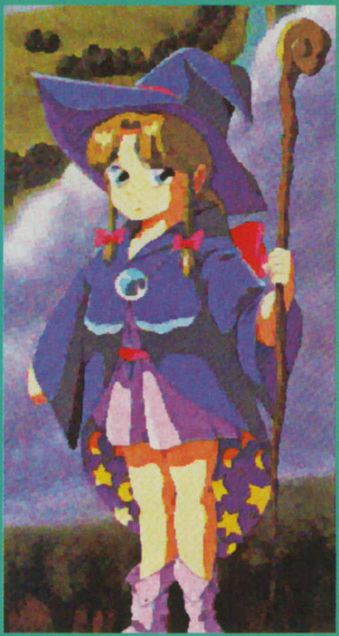
I found that there is a perceptible difference between the easy, normal and hard playing options, thus provide a decent game for all players. So often with a game like this it seems the only contrast is a

CONTINUED

Hooded zombie in mutant tandoori shocker. I haven't managed to sit down for weeks

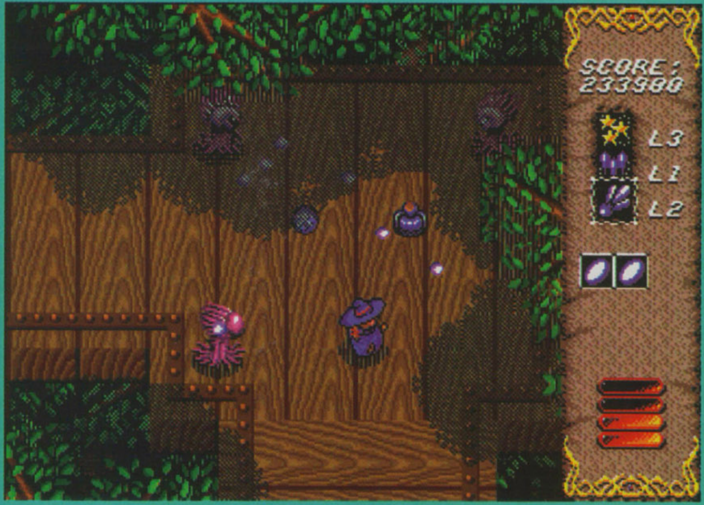


A giant living tree that spits out a wide beam of energy and thrusts spikes through the ground. Hmm, seems reasonable to me



THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

There are three weapons to be utilized. Each is represented in the top right-hand corner of the screenshots



Mutant walking jellyfish on dry land, that fire things at you? Pull the other one. Anyway they are relatively easy to destroy

CONTINUED

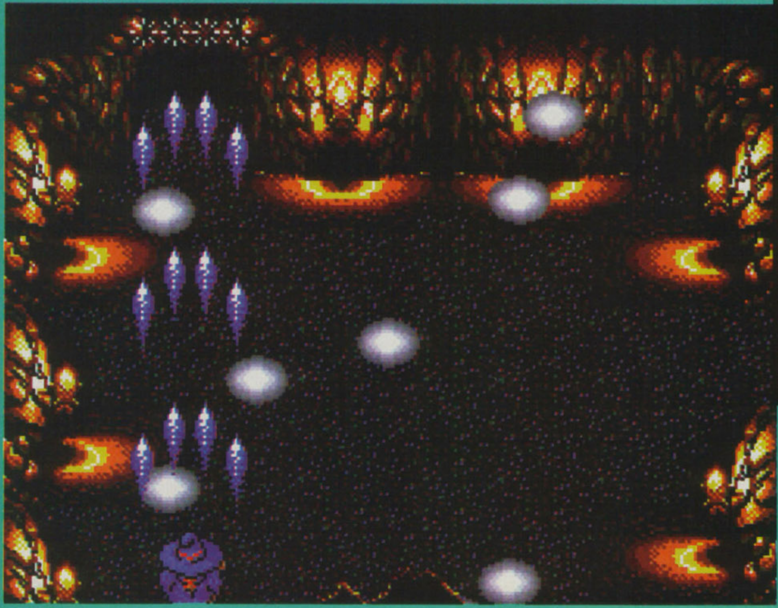
change in the number of power-ups available.

Each of the seven levels has its own distinctive graphical style, even though the gameplay alters very little. The quality of the graphics is very high, except perhaps for occasional glitch when one of the larger sprites is on screen.

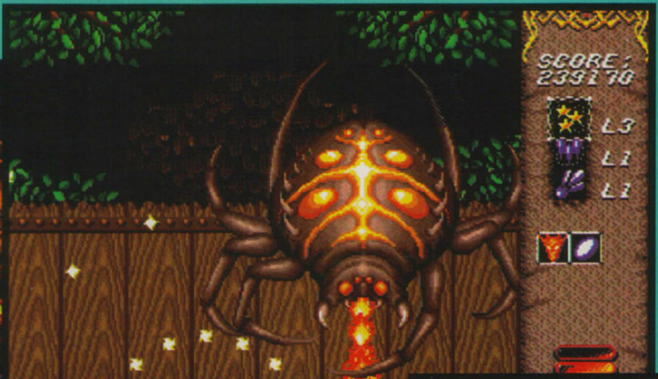
Whoever designed the end-of-level guardians is obviously the possessor of a uniquely twisted mind. A live tree that fires a massive energy beam at you, a three headed mutant, a disembodied knight and a giant fire-breathing fire spider all go to show what a troubled individual the game designer is.

The sound is a let-down. The average sound effects and cheesy tunes mean that the atmosphere of the game isn't at all diminished by the sound being turned down. That is a big shame, because a little creepy music and some juicy sampled effects would have made this a far better game.

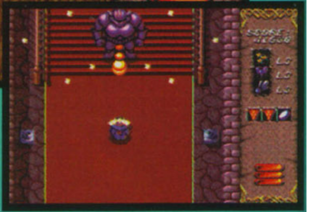
Similarity in gameplay is the bane of all shoot'em-ups and Twinkle Tale is no exception. If games players are looking for more



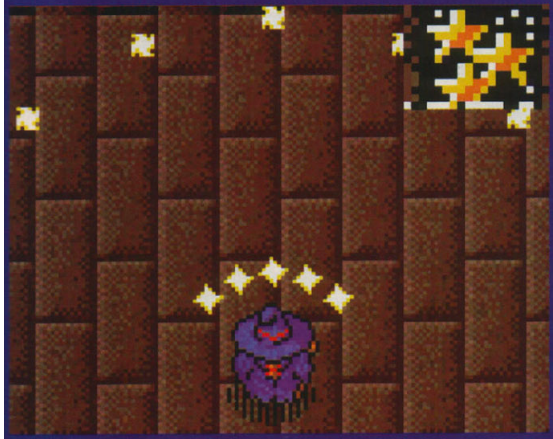
These fast moving amoebae spell trouble for all but the fastest moving



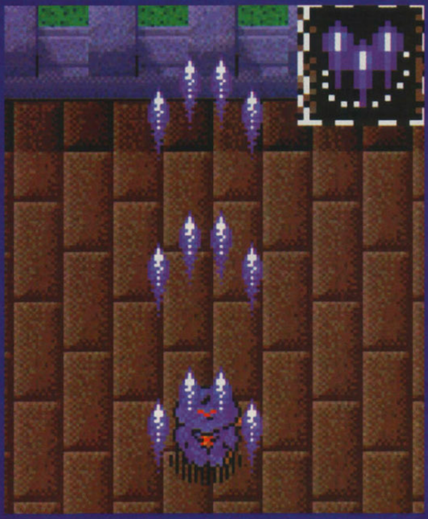
(Above) The end of level two sees an oversized arachnid doing its best to singe your pony-tails. "Come into my parlour..."



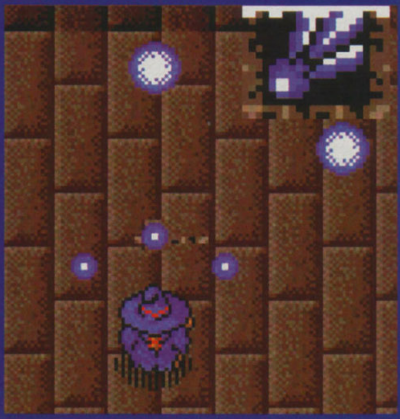
This heavily armoured chap is a bit of a weakling. A good barrage of hits in the chest will soon see him off



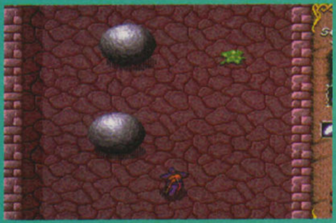
***SPREAD WEAPON:** This is a standard weapon that fires star shaped projectiles. Fully powered up it fires five stars in an arc that covers approximately 60 degrees*



***ENERGY BEAMS:** This weapon fires straight forward with four beams when fully powered up. Best used when the target doesn't move*



***THE HOMING SHOTS:** These fire out in the pattern shown in the picture. As soon as anything comes on screen the shots will zoom in on their nearest enemy target*



Huge boulders come zigzagging towards you. You can't shoot them so you had better be quick

than dodging bullets and ugly creatures – no matter how well it is done – then this is not the game for them.

In isolation Twinkle Tale is a good quality shoot'em-up, professionally produced in the main, that deserves hours of play. In the context of its contemporaries however, it isn't original enough to warrant an immediate unconditional purchase.

DOWN TO EXPERIENCE

If you're looking for a ground-based shoot'em-up this is better than many others especially if you're a relatively new player.

If you're more experienced however, and are after fast-paced annihilating action then Gley Lancer or Thunder Force IV are games which are much more suited to your requirements.

JOOLS

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

SHOOT'EM-UP

TWINKLE TALE

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

78%

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	5
PLAYABILITY	8
DURABILITY	8

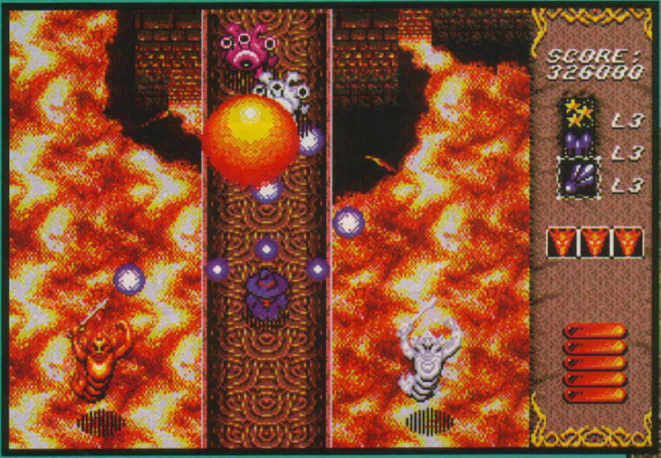
UPPERS

- Well-balanced difficulty
- Wide variety of graphics
- A quality game that will please newcomers

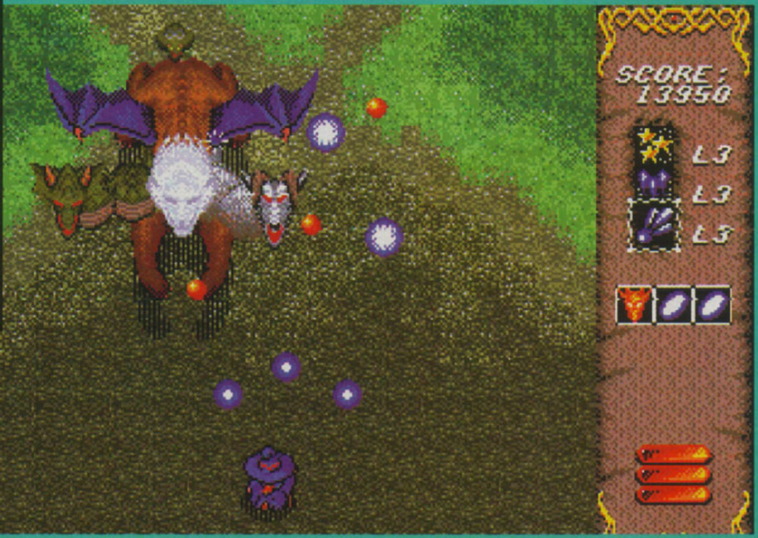
DOWNERS

- Disappointing sound
- Not original enough to stand out too far from the crowd

Thanks to Megacom,13 Mansfield Road, Nottingham for supplying this game. Tel: 0602 475151.



The molten lava beneath spells instant deep fry. That's before you begin to contend with all the monsters

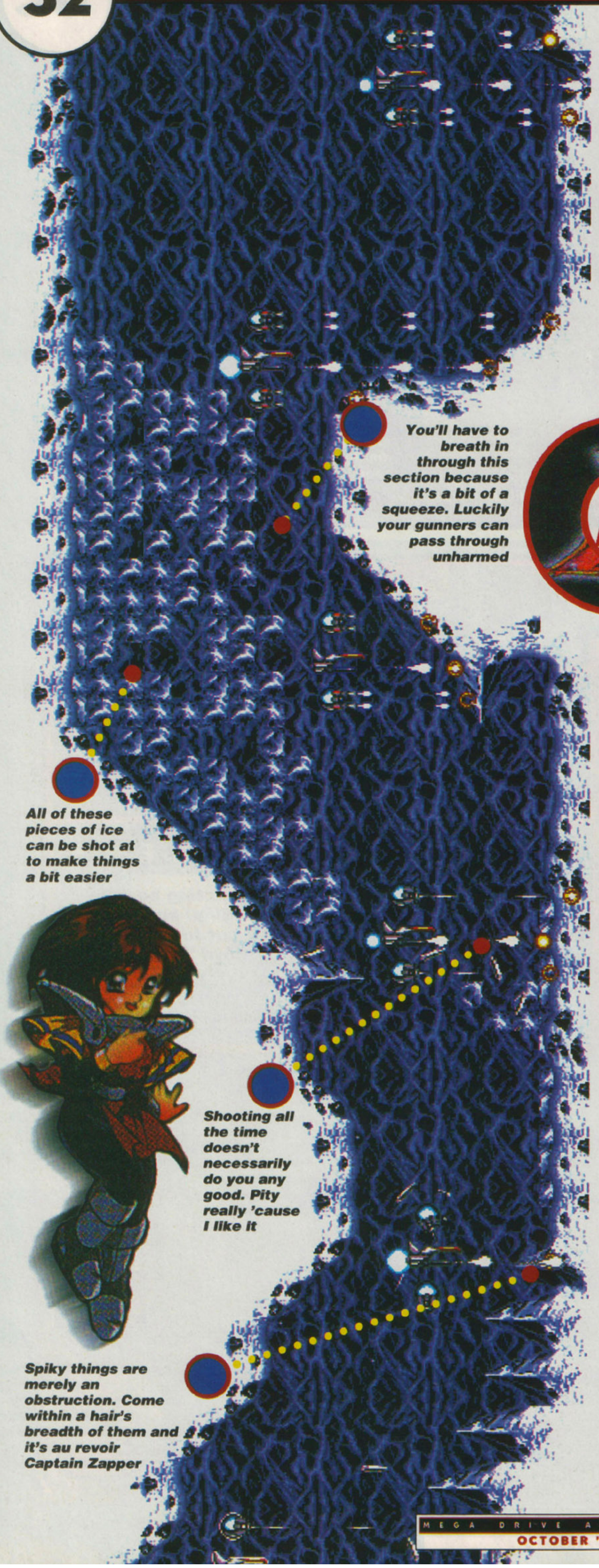


Make sure you don't end up in front of this three headed flying mutant because it'll make a very swift and unavoidable swoop towards you

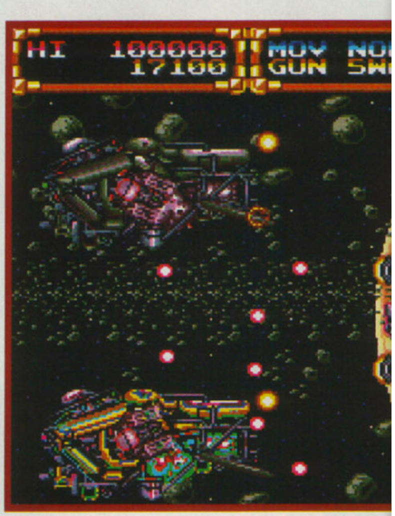
From the author of Gynoug comes the latest shoot'em-up. Using all the best features from just about every other blasting game it looks like another classic has arrived.

GLEY

REVIEW


You'll have to breath in through this section because it's a bit of a squeeze. Luckily your gunners can pass through unharmed
All of these pieces of ice can be shot at to make things a bit easier
Shooting all the time doesn't necessarily do you any good. Pity really 'cause I like it
Spiky things are merely an obstruction. Come within a hair's breadth of them and it's au revoir Captain Zapper

Everyone likes a good blast from time to time. There's nothing quite like the satisfaction gained from blowing the alien heathen scum to kingdom come and saving the universe from eternal doom. The Mega Drive is a machine that certainly has more than its fair share of scrolling shooters. The last count we made here at *MAG* placed the number at somewhere around 80, so do we really need another one?


HI 100000
17100
MOV
GUN

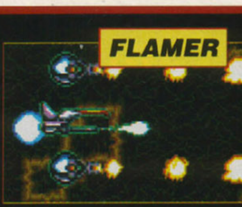
The biggest problem with this sort of thing is that developers' imaginations are getting more and more whacky as the years go by. Gone are the days of simply shooting at line after line of Space Invaders as they fall from the heavens. Now we have to negotiate levels that require mental and physical dexterity.

Gley Lancer is definitely a game that falls into this last category. It not only involves blowing the crap out of 12 levels full of extremely violent aliens, but it also requires a certain degree of strategy in choosing power-ups as well as the route through the later sections.

The aliens you're up against are pretty tough cookies. As the ace girlie pilot of the crack fighter squadron the Lancers, you must go out and wreak revenge upon your parents' murderers. It's your typical Japanese game plot; little girl

ZAP ZONE

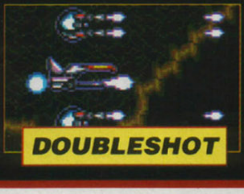
FLAMER



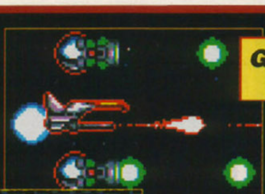
Two dirty great big flame-throwers bolted onto the side of your ship

DOUBLESHOT

A doubleshot, now I wonder what that does?

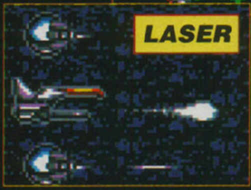


GREEN BOUNCY PLASMA



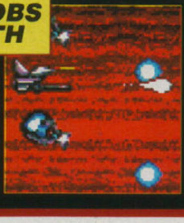
Apparently called a bounder, this rather fun little gizmo makes plasma bolts bounce all over the screen

LASER



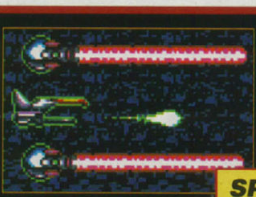
Erm, cor I fink dat shoots a laser across der screen

BLUE BLOBS OF DEATH



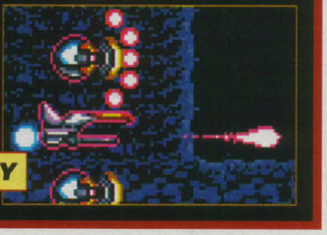
The on-board computer calls this spread, but it never appears to do much spreading

SPEAR



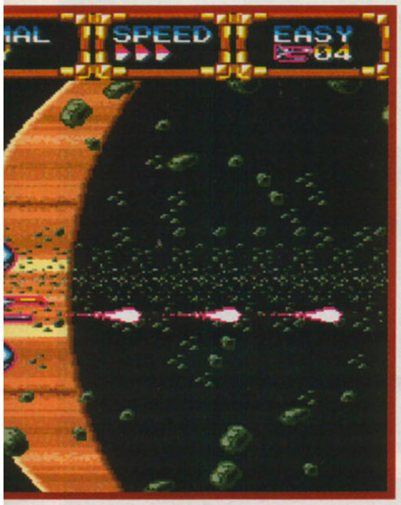
This one's a bit different. It's a like clubbing the bad guys with two great big sticks of Blackpool rock

FIVE WAY



I bet you any money that a gun called a five way shoots five bolts at the same time

LANCER



The first level takes you to the rings of Saturn where not only will you come across some rather large and unfriendly aliens, but you'll also be treated to a spectacular parallax effect

loves daddy, daddy gets killed by bug-eyed aliens, girl finds big spaceship and nukes half the known universe in temper tantrum.

Beginning with a rather splendid introduction sequence, the game immediately jumps into a selection screen where you must choose how your gunners will react in battle.

At first, the reasoning behind this is a little unclear, but later you'll learn that careful choice can make life considerably easier. For example, in places it may be very useful to have gunners that automatically home in on the nearest available target, whether it's above, behind or in front of your ship. Elsewhere you may simply need extra firepower added to the front of your craft.

The gunners are initially activated by collecting power-ups found throughout the game and can be in charge of anything from simple lasers to bouncy green-plasma-globule firers. Each weapon has advantages and disadvantages that take into account range, accuracy and power.

POWER UP

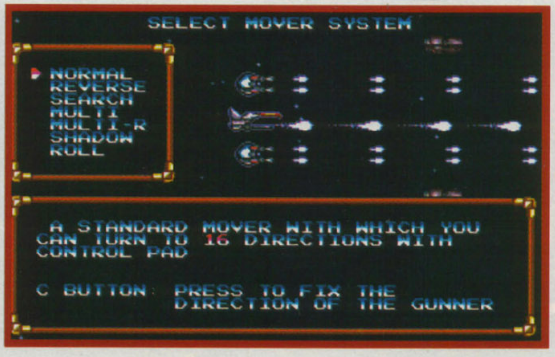
Looking at the screenshots you may be thinking that Gley Lancer is nothing more than simple left to right scrolling megablast. You couldn't be more wrong. In places the background scrolls diagonally from top left to bottom right, vertically from top to bottom, backwards from right to left and even diagonally upwards from right to left. It's not often that you come across this much variety in a single game now is it?

Each of the levels is very different in both appearance and shooting style. In fact playing the game is very much like taking part in a game of 'spot where they nicked that idea from'! The first levels are straight out of Super R-Type, especially the underwater section that is very similar indeed. Later on there are sections like the ice caps from Thunderforce III, the maze sections from Turrican II on the Amiga and even the odd bit pinched from Gradius on the NES.

Despite this, the game still comes across as being very original in places. Take for example the area that is like flying through a game of Tetris. Large squares of rock slide from right to left in different patterns enclosing areas of the screen. You have to negotiate a path through that ensures you don't get trapped. Believe me it's bloody hard and I got extremely frustrated

CONTINUED

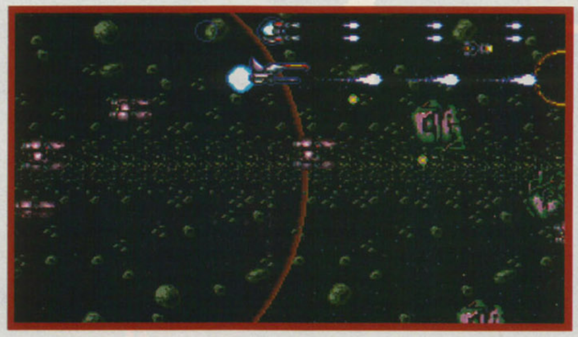
Select the order that your gunners will adhere to. Searchers home in on attackers, shadow follows you around, multis fire all over the place and reverse shoots backwards


SELECT MOVER SYSTEM

- ▶ NORMAL
- REVERSE
- SEARCH
- MULTI
- MULTI-R
- SHADOW
- ROLL

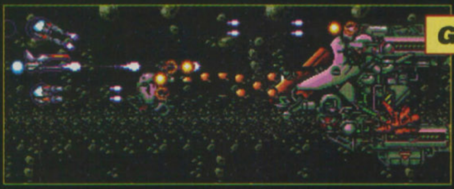
A STANDARD MOVER WITH WHICH YOU CAN TURN TO 16 DIRECTIONS WITH CONTROL PAD

C BUTTON: PRESS TO FIX THE DIRECTION OF THE GUNNER

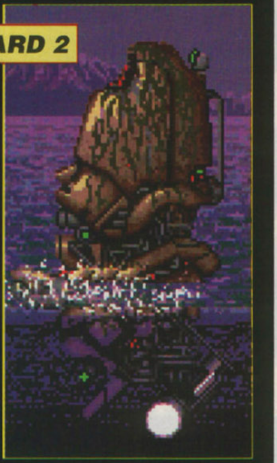


Things can get very hectic and although it doesn't slow the action at all, it can get very confusing to the eye. Pausing for a quick break is often required

CUSTODIANS OF DOOM

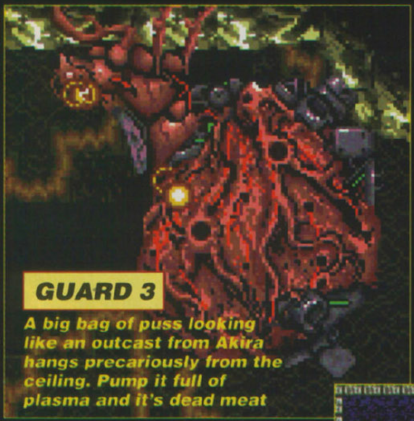


GUARD 1 Big lumbering ships tend to look extremely ridiculous when they have stupid great tentacles sticking out of the front



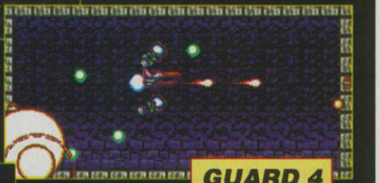
GUARD 2

I'm not sure what this is supposed to be. Maybe a robotic squid? Anyway it lives underwater and spits torpedoes. Friendly huh?



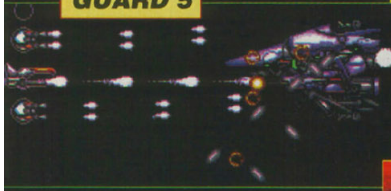
GUARD 3

A big bag of puss looking like an outcast from Akira hangs precariously from the ceiling. Pump it full of plasma and it's dead meat



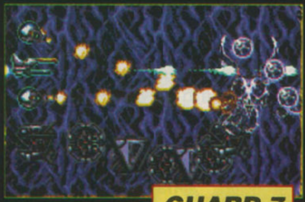
GUARD 4

More of an end-of-level hazard. You fly into a big room and the walls start moving in. Keep shooting at the creature that pops up and everything will get nuked



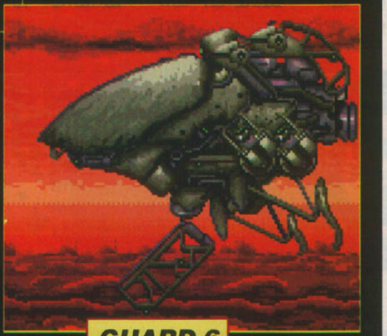
GUARD 5

A huge spaceship that bombards you with little grey things. It starts with a big gun that shoots toothpaste, but I've already killed that



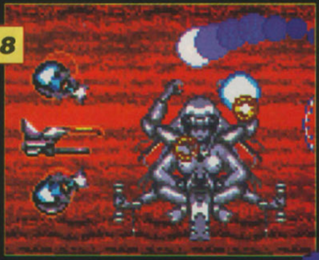
GUARD 7

The evil robotic snow-worm hides behind the latticework of ice before thrusting its heaving and deadly form towards you. There's a lot to be said for melodrama you know



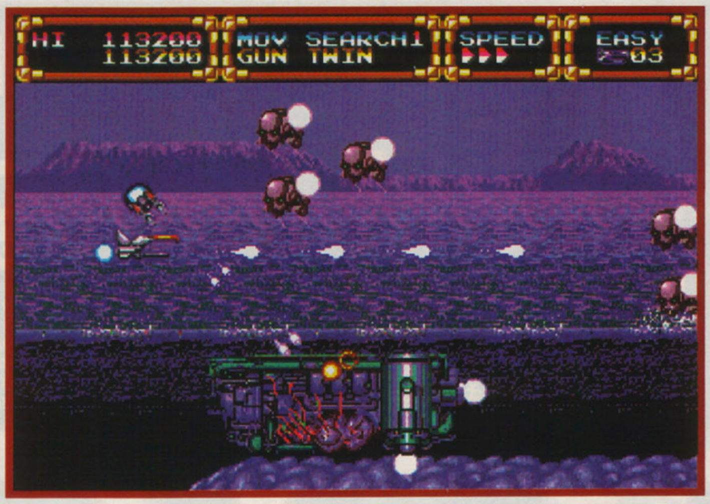
GUARD 6

Another nondescript ship this one. Looks a bit like an Ewok's house...On the other hand, no it doesn't. Anyway it's easy to destroy



GUARD 8

Quite where a statue comes in I don't know. Jap games always have a spot of religious imagery in them



Remind you of something? Looks decidedly like a section from a little known game by the name of R-Type. It looks bloody great though. Superb parallax scrolling and ace wobbly bendy rocks under the water

CONTINUED

– something that doesn't happen very often.

One thing that becomes more and more apparent as you work through Gley Lancer is that a lot of attention has been paid to the presentation.

A NEW WAVE

Throughout all of the levels the graphics are extremely well drawn and there are some superb giant sprites that jump around the screen. Coupled with this, the use of parallax scrolling adds tremendously to the game, and although still obviously Oriental in origin, the game takes Mega Drive products to a new level.

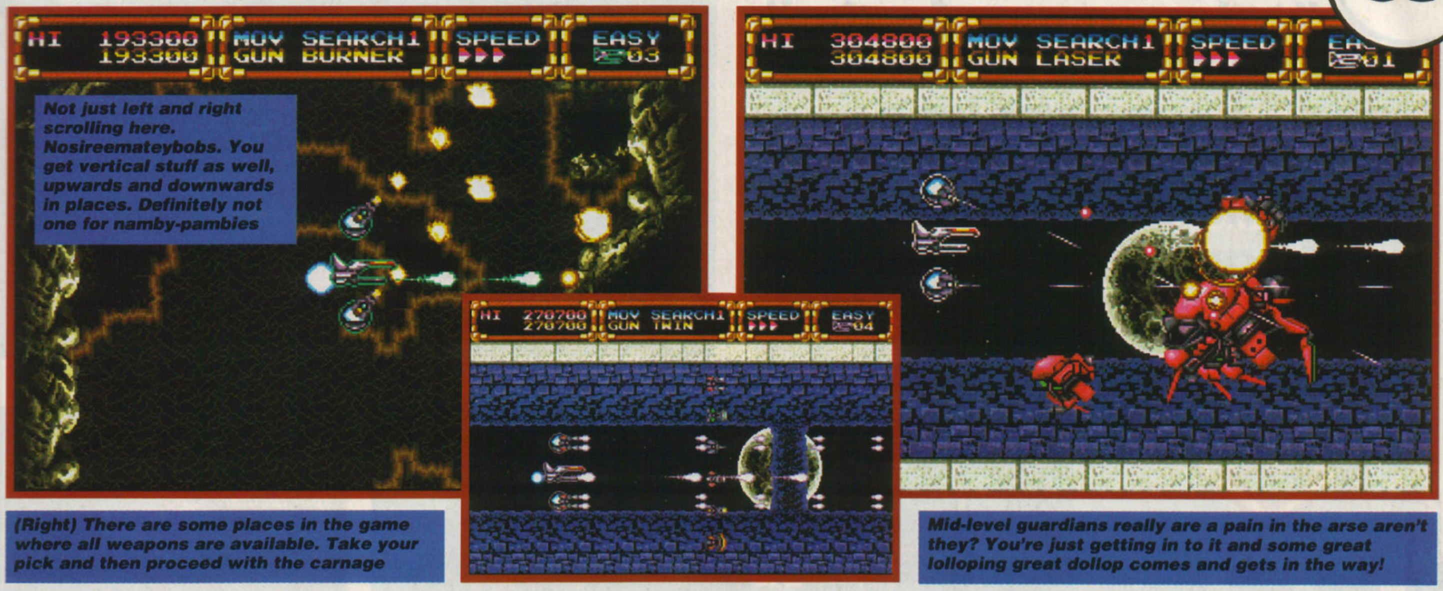
All this is in response to the new wave of games coming in on the SNES. Mega Drive developers can no longer afford to slacken off in the presentation department when there is that sort of competition!

Sonically this is considerably better than your average Mega Drive game. Sampled sounds and speech are the order of the day here and they are all used to enhance areas of the game, as is the rather splendid military soundtrack that wouldn't be out of place on one of those Magna cartoons.

Overall, I have to say that this is certainly one of the best action games I've played so far on the Mega Drive. It looks good enough to keep its head held high among the competition, and it's big enough to hold your attention for a considerable amount of time – especially on the hard level!

JOHN

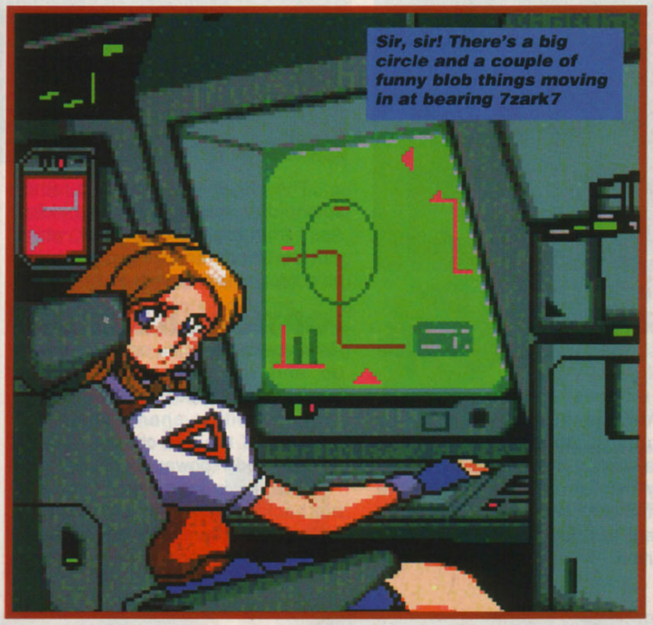
RELEASE DATE: JAPANESE IMPORT • PRICE: £34.99


HI 193300 193300
MOV SEARCH1 GUN BURNER
SPEED ▶▶▶
EASY 03
HI 304800 304800
MOV SEARCH1 GUN LASER
SPEED ▶▶▶
HI 270700 270700
MOV SEARCH1 GUN TWIN
SPEED ▶▶▶
EASY 04

Not just left and right scrolling here. Nosireematey bobs. You get vertical stuff as well, upwards and downwards in places. Definitely not one for namby-pambies

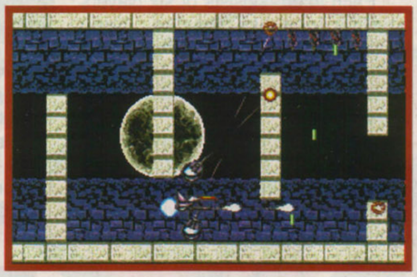
(Right) There are some places in the game where all weapons are available. Take your pick and then proceed with the carnage

Mid-level guardians really are a pain in the arse aren't they? You're just getting in to it and some great lolloping great dollop comes and gets in the way!



Sir, sir! There's a big circle and a couple of funny blob things moving in at bearing 7zark7

Hmm, everything appears to be green...



Labyrinthine sections ensure that Gley Lancer is different from other shoot'em-ups. Except of course Turrican II on the Amiga from which this section is obviously 'borrowed'

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

SHOOT'EM-UP

GLEY LANCER

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

89%

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
PLAYABILITY	8
DURABILITY	8

UPPERS

- Superb graphics
- Excellent use of samples
- Enormous levels
- Loads of new ideas

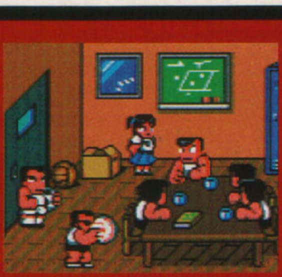
DOWNERS

- Sometimes is a little too frustrating
- It's not coming out officially for ages

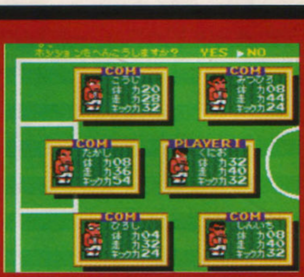
Thanks to Megacom, 13 Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Tel: 0602 475151 for providing this game.

"At last, a new football game for the Mega Drive," I hear you long suffering fanatics cry. Well, I'm afraid that possibly the worst game of this genre has arrived just in time for the new soccer season!

TEAM TALK



Meet the team discussing vital tactics with its manager



These team stats are enough to frighten the wits out of any budding footballers out there

REVIEW

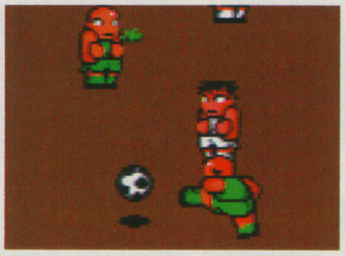
Well, well, well, so the Japs have nicked Gary Lineker from us and what do we get in return? Techno Soccer. Now I may be ignorant of the impact of football on Japanese culture, but if Techno Soccer reflects anything then; the Japanese do not take the game very seriously and Gary won't have much trouble scoring a hatful of goals come Saturday afternoon.

This is a knock-out footy competition for one or two players. The quality of the opposition improves the further you progress into the tournament – just for a change.

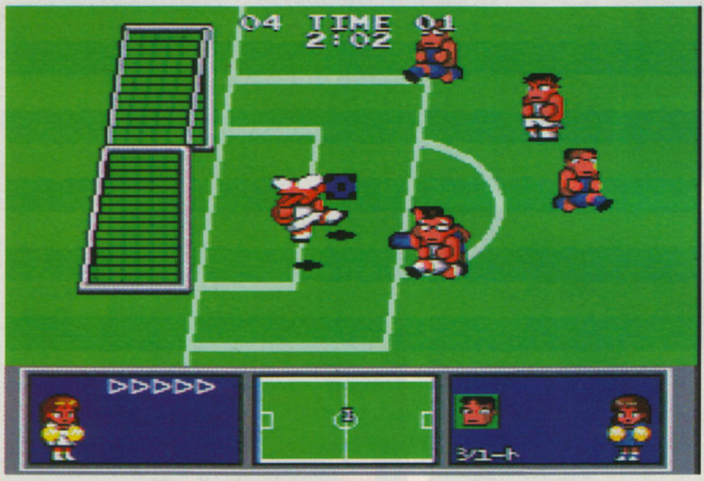
SLIPPERY SURFACES

When the opposing team is changed the pitch surface is also altered to anything from Tarmac to ice of all things! Despite the obvious (Obvious to me any-way!) differences experienced between playing on grass and dry mud, the players respond in the same way no matter what the pitch.

Graphically Techno Soccer looks like the coin-op World Cup 90, with a side-on view. Apart from the poorly copied graphics, all similarities end there even though both are knock-out football competitions.



Vinny Jones mistakes the ball for the opposing centre forward

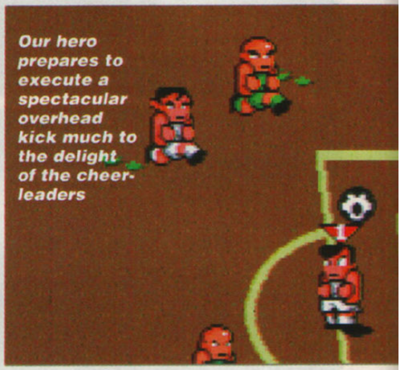


Quick, get out the way! It's an opposition 'square ball' power up

Each team consists of six players who all look like they've been dropped from a great height, and some of these soccer aces wear glasses, not quite sure about the point of that.

Of the five outfield players you only have total control over one who you use to set up moves. He is indicated on an overhead view of the pitch shown along the bottom of the screen.

The others can kick and tackle, but there is no way of actually controlling their movements. Whichever part of the field the ball is in play they simply charge into the area, and only when they are near an opponent can you press the tackle or kick button.



Our hero prepares to execute a spectacular overhead kick much to the delight of the cheer-leaders

The player you control is rather splendid at scoring overhead kicks. Apart from this, he is dreadful, which can be bloody annoying considering he scores nine times out of 10.

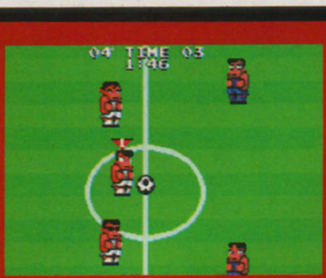
OPTICAL ILLUSION

However, there is the option to power up and run faster, shoot more accurately and kick the ball harder. The opposition shares the latter ability, and the ball changes shape when kicked in power up mode.

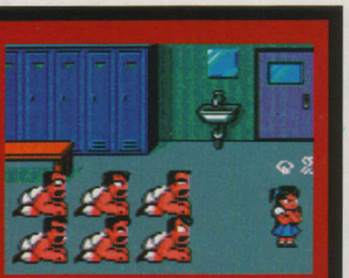
The play is painstakingly slow and the backing music simply irritating. Although the computer opposition is quite tough to begin with, it is just a

TEC
SOC

RELEASE DATE: JAPANESE IMPORT • PRICE: £34.99



The action (?) is about to commence



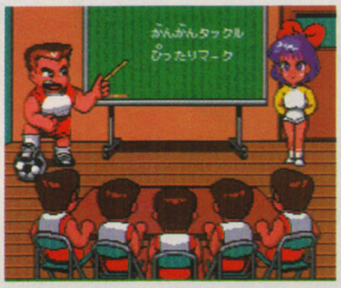
"That's right start grovelling. It's division two for us next season"

matter of working out where to position Roy of the Rovers and what technique to use for a goal. For example, in the first game position your control player just outside the 18 yard box, get one of your lemmings...sorry team mates to hit an up and under, then an overhead kick right into the goal. Hardly thrilling stuff. The bloke who designed this game obviously followed England in the '92 Euro Championships.

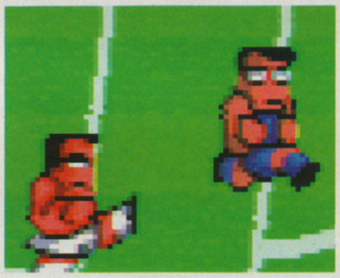
Does the game have anything going for it I hear you ask? Well actually there is one thing. The manager of the team happens to be female, a cheer-leader in fact, and a very pretty one at that.

Also when the team lose, they fall on the floor begging and crying for forgiveness. I thought Nottingham Forest were the only team prone to that type of behaviour. It's the funniest thing I've seen in weeks.

GERRY



So that's how it's done. Team talk Japanese style



The truth about Elvis revealed! He is alive and well, earning the odd yen by playing in goal for a crap Japanese football...sorry soccer team

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

SPORT

TECHNO SOCCER

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

10%

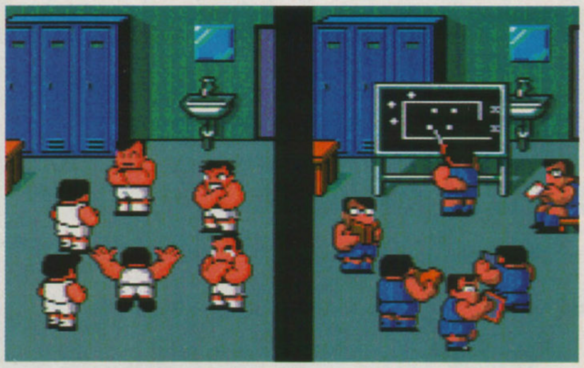
GRAPHICS	2
SOUND	2
PLAYABILITY	2
DURABILITY	1

UPPERS

- Erm...pretty box

DOWNERS

- The complete game
- Sorry Palsoft a total waste of money and time



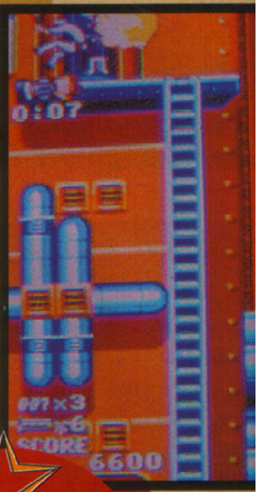
We actually won a game so it's crisps and soft drinks all round, hurrah!

HN

CER

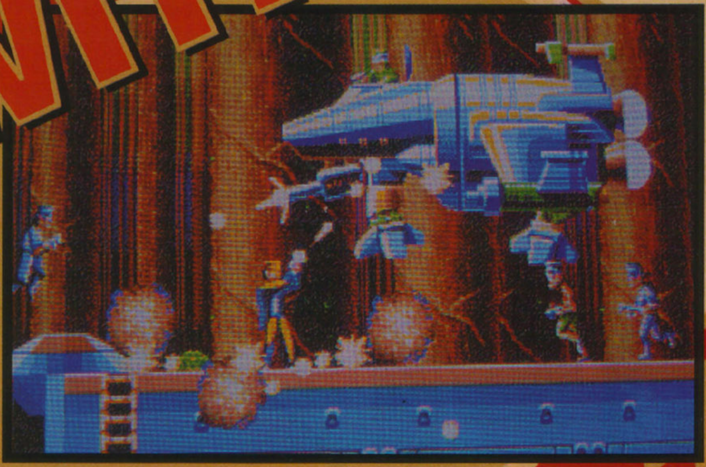
Any game that promises the presence of Grace Jones is destined to raise a few eyebrows, it may well raise a few other things but we won't to go into that now!

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE



PREVIEW

Old scarface Blofeld, arch-villain, pussy stroker and all-round bald person has returned in Domark's latest project, James Bond. His intention is to dominate the globe, but he has realised that to do this with any certainty of success he must first eradicate James Bond, secret agent, pussy stroker and all-round dinner-jacket wearer.



Level two takes the frantic action deep into a forest where 007 is attacked from all sides. The quality of the animation really shows when the action is of the shoot'em-up variety

ACTION MAN

So he kidnapped a scientist who just happened to have a cloning machine which he used to reproduce some of Bond's enemies, to make things difficult for him.

This leaves Bond with four zones of jumping and shooting, all through which he has to wear a DJ. The first level takes place on a huge boat, where Bond must find a bomb and then decide which is the best place to plant it. It's then on to a rendezvous with Jaws.

Bond can shoot in six directions, and throw grenades to fight off the copious amounts of highly expendable guards that do their level best to kill him.

It is while shooting that the quality of the animation used for Bond's sprite becomes apparent. Let's just say that the guy who did a lot of the graphics for Prince of Persia was involved very heavily.

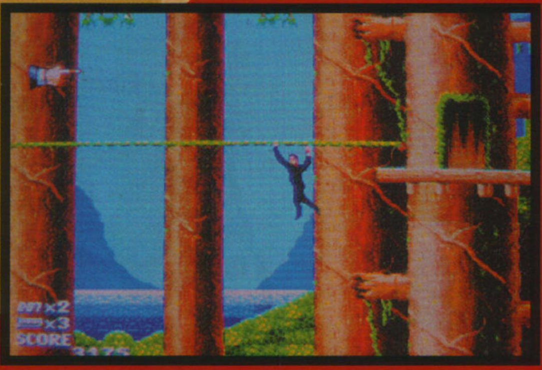
The remaining three levels continue the shoot-and-explore theme, but different foes turn up. Bones, the voodoo chappy from Live and Let Die raises himself from the ground; Mayday from a View to a Kill, high kicks in her violent way and even Oddjob, hat-thrower extraordinaire gets a look-in.

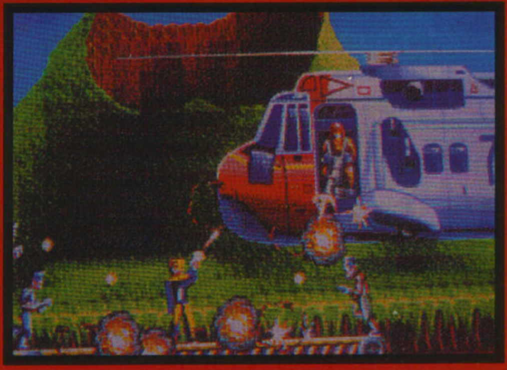
James Bond has all the ingredients for a great game, let's hope that Ferrier's philosophy of quality sees the game through to a satisfactory conclusion.

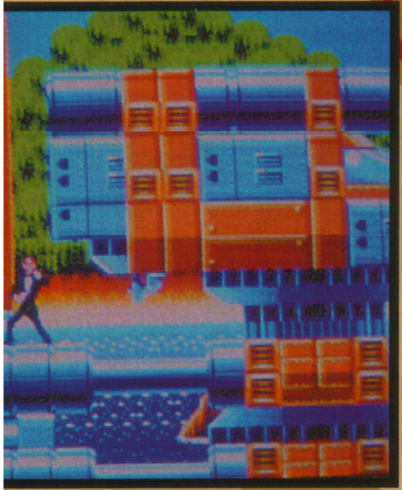
JOOLS

(Bottom right) Here the older sprite graphics appear, but the battle with the helicopter will remain in the finished game

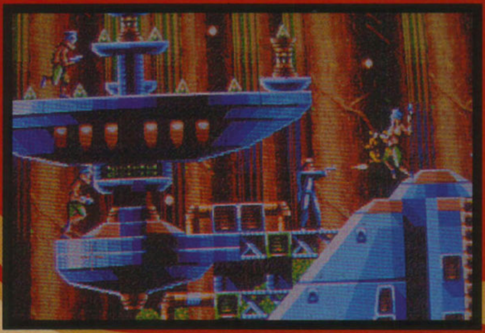
(Right) Bond doing a very passable impression of Tarzan as he dangles from a vine during the second level. The quality of the animation could well be among the best on the Mega Drive



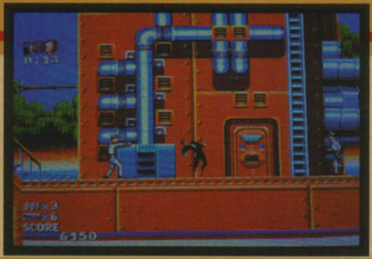




(Below) Bond poses dramatically for the camera somewhere on the boat that is the setting for the first level. The non-linear design of the game adds variety to the gameplay



(Left) Bond could be in a spot of bother here as shots rain down on him from all directions. Will Bond survive?



(Right) Bond takes a hit from one of the trigger happy guards. Still, it wouldn't be much of game without someone shooting at him, would it?

The Kremlin is positioning itself for the hi-tech software future. Jools talks to the company's manager, Russell Ferrier.

Addlestone, is a one-street town off the M25. This town with its two pubs, thin roads and fat roadworks, is not what you might call a bubbling cauldron of state-of-the-art innovation. Yet this is the home of Domark's development house, The Kremlin.

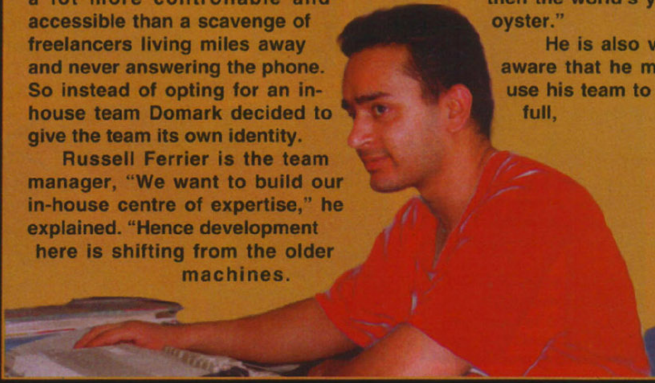
HOME BASE

Domark founded The Kremlin in April 1990, aware that its own development team would be a lot more controllable and accessible than a scavenge of freelancers living miles away and never answering the phone. So instead of opting for an in-house team Domark decided to give the team its own identity.

Russell Ferrier is the team manager, "We want to build our in-house centre of expertise," he explained. "Hence development here is shifting from the older machines. The C64 and the ST will be dropped once current projects have been completed for the more up-to-date formats; PC, CD technology and the Sega consoles."

Ferrier also plans a move away from Domark's previous chosen projects, conversions and licences. Without much prompting this is where Ferrier got into his stride. "We're looking more and more at original titles, Bond is a name which is not based on any film. It is a completely original scenario. It's inspiring when you look at the success that Sonic had and if you have the ability to meet that challenge and produce a game which is as good as that then the world's your oyster."

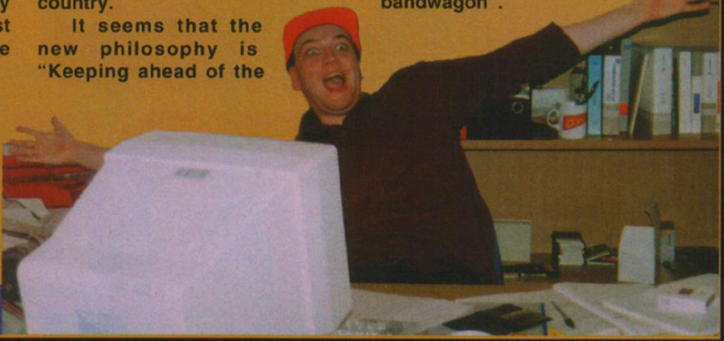
He is also very aware that he must use his team to the full, "I mean coin-op conversions have their place...but when you are talking about a development team which has the skills of The Kremlin it seems a waste to take that expertise and creative talent and just say 'convert that' because that doesn't involve any creativity".



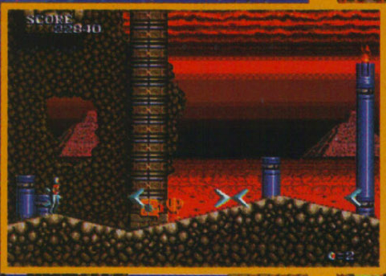
PERFECTION

Anyone who bought Skull and Crossbones, programmed by The Kremlin last year for the Amiga or ST may well see this attitude as something of a shock. The company has had duffers in the past but Ferrier seems dedicated to improving the standards and making it one of the premier development teams in the country.

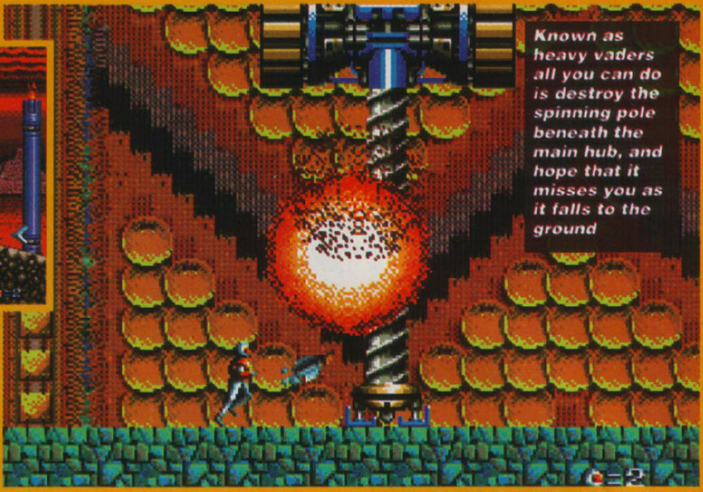
It seems that the new philosophy is "Keeping ahead of the technical developments in the market-place, so whatever form the console market may take in the next few years it is The Kremlins' decision to strive to be at the forefront of that, not just jumping on a bandwagon".



ATOMIC RUNNER



One of the six weapons, this is called the boomerang probably because it always comes back



Known as heavy vaders all you can do is destroy the spinning pole beneath the main hub, and hope that it misses you as it falls to the ground

It's been hyped in the States and Japan, but will this coin-op conversion deliver the goods?

REVIEW

Someone thought it was a good idea to convert a six-year-old coin-op to the Mega Drive. Well, it would be cheap and make loads of money wouldn't it? I sincerely doubt however, that this could have been attempted with a worse game.

Where do I begin? Gameplay is very thin. I know it's a shoot'em-up, but there is a lot you can do with that, a game like Revenge of Shinobi is a good example of what can be achieved with a walking shoot'em-up.

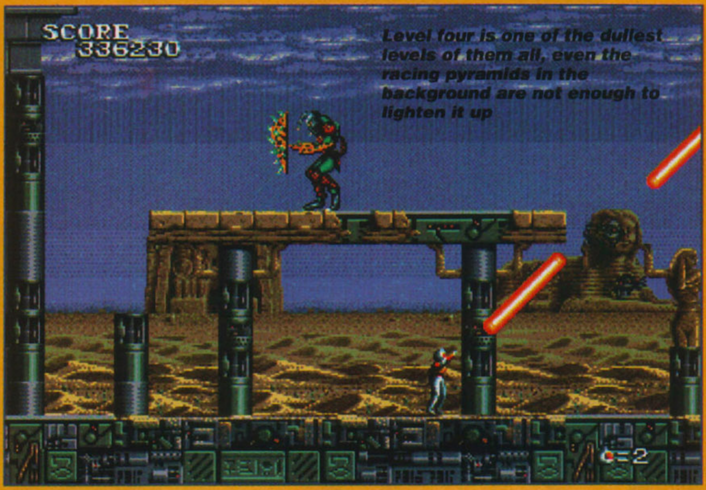
WHOOPS!

Atomic Runner falls down for two reasons. The first is the repetitive nature; the same bad guys turn up all the time, do the same things and always kill you in the same irritating manner.

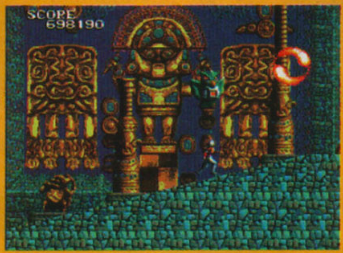
The second calamitous reason is that the gameplay hangs around the most distressing gimmick. An enforced scroll. This means the character is permanently running to the right.

Now I know nearly all flying shoot'em-ups have an enforced scroll but you are usually free to roam all over the screen. Here the

RELEASE DATE: AMERICAN IMPORT • PRICE: £34.99



Level four is one of the dullest levels of them all, even the racing pyramids in the background are not enough to lighten it up



If you manage to reach level 5, you probably deserve a medal for patience beyond the cause of duty

character can't fly, it can only walk and jump.

With far less freedom to move the effects of the scroll are more pronounced. Enemies come at you from all sides, so you stop running to dodge one of them only to find you're at the edge of the screen being pushed into an enemy attack. This happens all the time and is incredibly annoying.

The control system is awful. The hero, Chelnov, can't shoot straight up, only ahead or at an angle of 45 degrees. To turn around you have to push A, B or C at least, if not the D-pad as well.

You can't use the D-pad to turn around like Turrican, nor can you move backwards faster than the scroll. This means any power-ups can't be returned to and it also leads to problems with monsters.

LIFE-SAVER

Graphics-wise the tiny sprite used for Chelnov is pathetic, however the one redeeming feature is the background which is much better, especially when the game moves to New York around the Statue of Liberty. That is something worth seeing.

Audio must be experienced... mainly because it is phenomenally bad. It consists of pathetic, tacky little beeps and tunes that would be more at home in a Russian mausoleum.

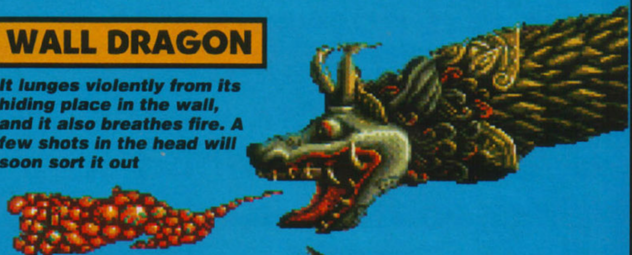
This is one to avoid. Bad enough to make anyone leave home if they got it as a Christmas present.

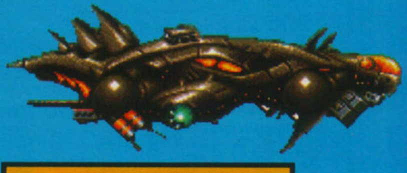
JOOLS

NAMBY-PAMBIES

WALL DRAGON

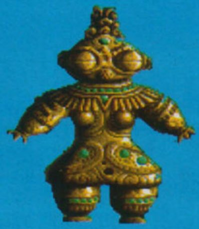
It lunges violently from its hiding place in the wall, and it also breathes fire. A few shots in the head will soon sort it out





DROP SHIP

Can be hit anywhere, but fires in all directions, sometimes with homing missiles. Try and shoot it from the ledge but watch for the troops it drops

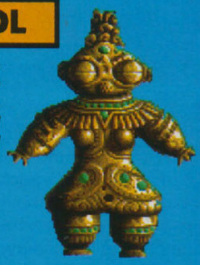


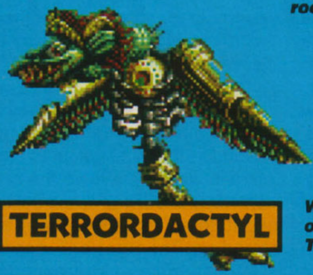
BRASS IDOL

Its side to side jumping is very unpredictable. Just shoot it in the eyes when they open and it won't last long

MOJO IDOL

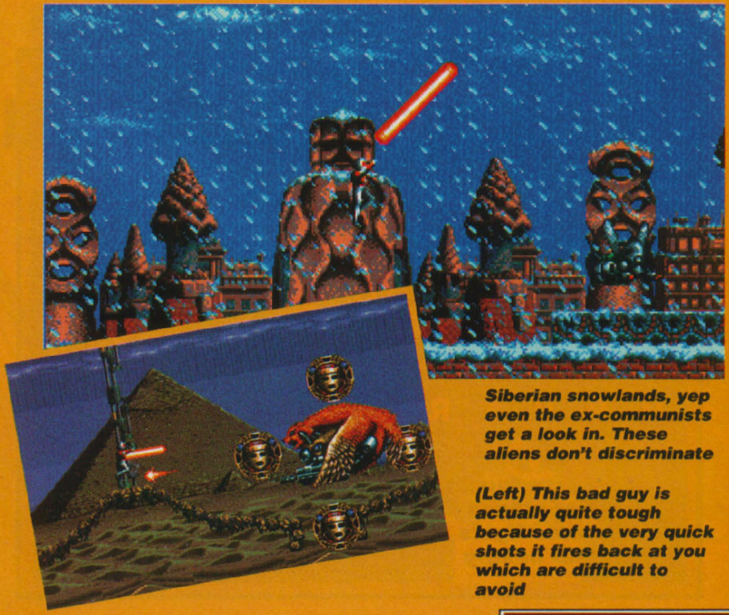
Very similar to the brass idol, but you need to hit its rocket powered head





TERRORDACTYL

Watch for the rocks it blows off the walls and its lunge. The chest is the weak point



Siberian snowlands, yep even the ex-communists get a look in. These aliens don't discriminate

(Left) This bad guy is actually quite tough because of the very quick shots it fires back at you which are difficult to avoid

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

SHOOT'EM-UP

ATOMIC RUNNER

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

40%

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	3
PLAYABILITY	2
DURABILITY	5

UPPERS

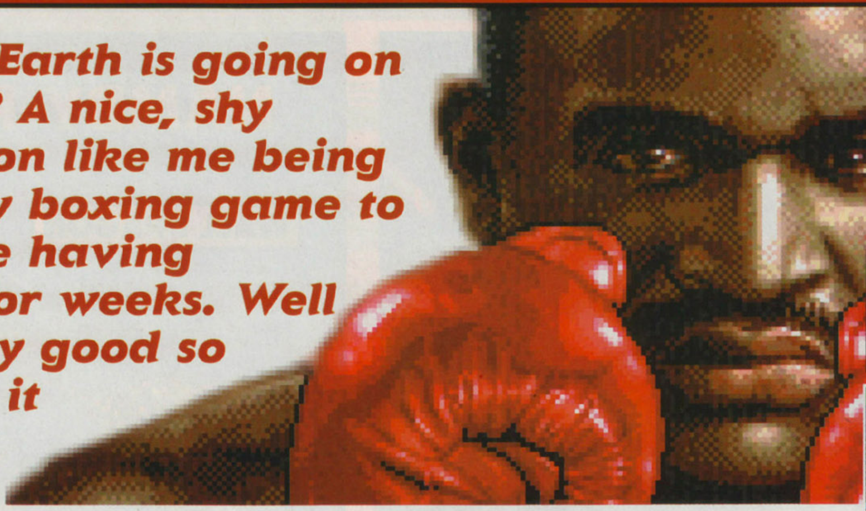
- *The graphics are very good in places*
- *Erm....*

DOWNERS

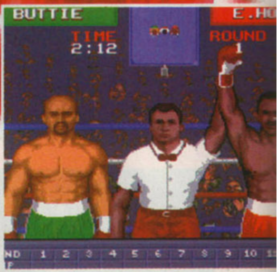
- *Ridiculous control method*
- *Repetitive alien attack patterns*
Distressingly bad sound

Thanks to Megacom,13 Mansfield Road, Nottingham for supplying this game. Tel: (0602) 475151.

What on Earth is going on in this place? A nice, shy retiring person like me being given a nasty boxing game to review. I'll be having nightmares for weeks. Well it looks pretty good so let's see how it plays...



(Below) That snake in the grass just managed to defeat my champ, Jam Buttie, by some very dodgy refereeing decisions



REVIEW

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S

REAL DEAL BOXING

What can anyone really say about a boxing game? Two people step into a square ring (eh?) and beat seven shades out of each other. So are the chaps at Sega going to break the mould and come up with the most original game since Space Invaders? The answer has to be a resounding "No"!

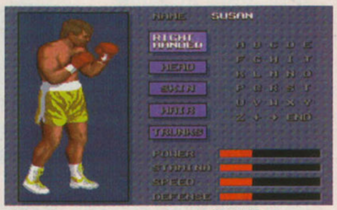
This offering has nothing new about the gameplay, but, as earlier said, there ain't a lot one can do to change the basic idea behind boxing. However, what sets this game apart are the outstanding graphics.

The boxers look good and the crowd really add to the fight. Some cheer, some boo, one loving couple kiss and cuddle by the ringside (a bit pervy if you ask me). Sounds are what one would expect in this type of game, loads of oos and aahs mixed with the sickening thud of boxing glove hitting flesh.

WAR WOUNDS

The game opens with shots of Evander, then its straight to the menu screen where you have the choice of starting a career from scratch or fighting an exhibition fight against Holyfield. The latter isn't recommended until you've more experience, I only lasted about 20 seconds.

In early rounds the computer opponent is quite slow and for beginners relatively easy to defeat. However, the more fights your man wins, the more difficult and experienced your opponent becomes.

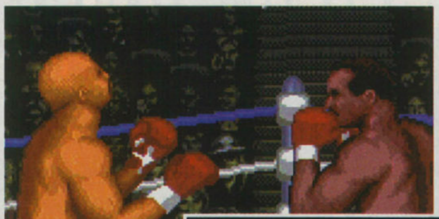


Create your very own fighting machine in seconds like Susan, another one of my clan

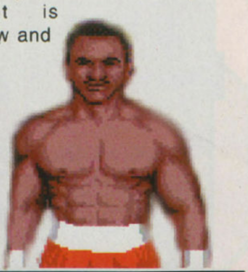
If three bouts in a row are lost the current fighter is judged to be too soft and subsequently retired. Manage to win 40 fights in a row then the title of The Greatest is awarded.

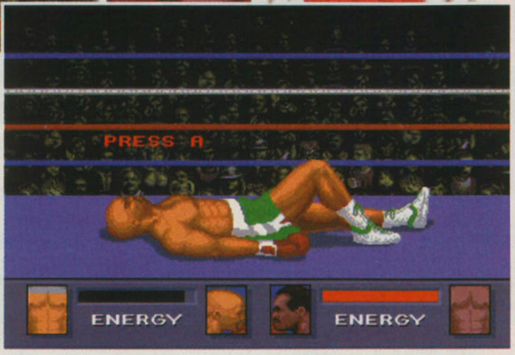
The game has a two-player mode, which can be a lot of fun, especially if the opposing player happens to pay your wages! If boxing games are up your street then this is the best you're going to get. Those who only have a casual interest may need more than just good graphics before shelling out the readies.

GERRY



Jam spots his second cousin in the crowd





With no energy remaining defeat is inevitable – my before-match pint must've been spiked

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

SPORT

HOLYFIELD'S BOXING

ONE/TWO PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE

57%

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	6
PLAYABILITY	6
DURABILITY	5

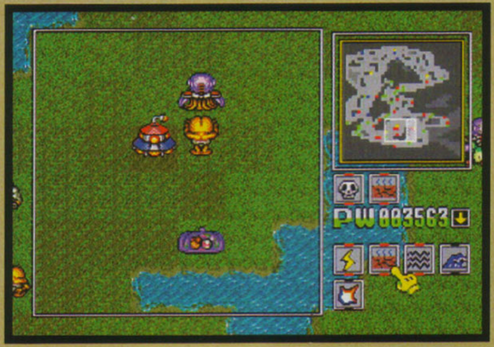
UPPERS

- Excellent graphics with some nice touches
- On later stages nice gruesome fights
- Best MD boxing game

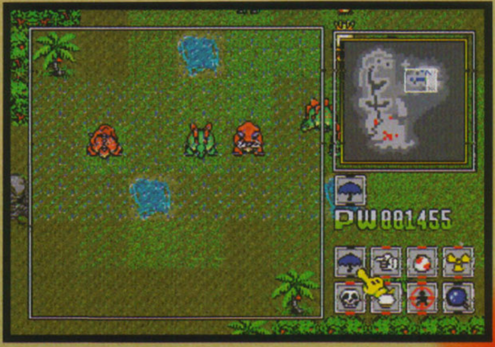
DOWNERS

- Limited appeal
- Opponents too easy or too difficult
- It's not enough to keep you interested for long

Making sure the population size of aliens remains below that of the dinosaurs is essential



Rain is extremely important because the dinosaurs must be kept regularly watered



MR BUMPTLES

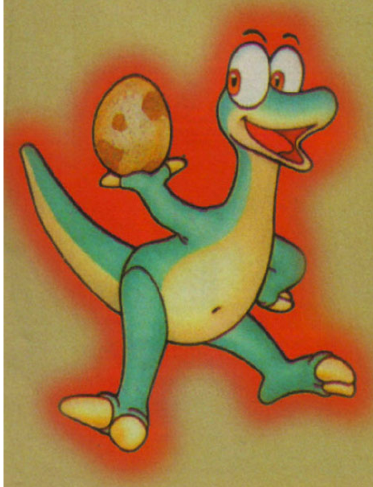
DYNA BROTHERS

Would you buy a Japanese Populous, but with dinosaurs and aliens instead of good and evil, then use it to try and change the course of history? Erm...

REVIEW

Well up yours Mr scientist, you were incredibly wrong! The dinosaurs dying out had absolutely nothing to do with huge meteorites, an excess of carbon dioxide or any of the other pathetic explanations you care to come up with.

Actually aliens came down and ate the prehistoric reptiles. The dinosaurs tried to defend themselves but it was no good, they were eaten. You now have the chance to take control, and right the wrongs of prehistory.



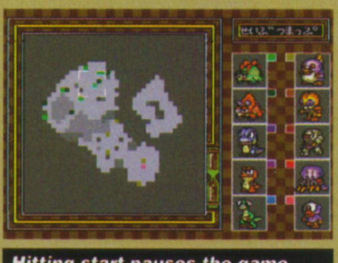
HEAVENLY BODY

As a Populous without all the crap about raising and lowering land, Dyna Brothers puts you in charge of an egg producing thing and several god-like powers. Again like Populous, you have a certain amount of power at your disposal, this comes in the form of points, with each activity you perform consuming a certain amount of that power.

There are eight possible activities in all, but four of these are very simple in operation; rain, return view to base, place marker, and view marker. The final four; laying eggs, movement, irradiation and disasters give more choice in what you can do, and as such use more power.

There are five different kinds of dinosaur that can be created by laying an egg. The cheapest two to produce are vegetarians, the two dearer ones are

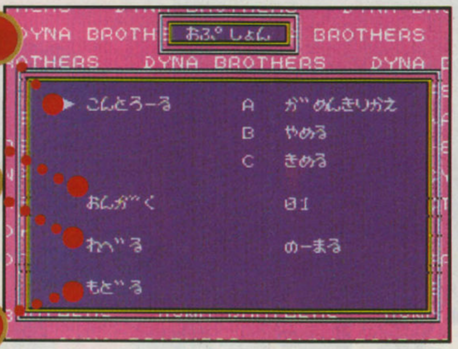
CONTINUED



Hitting start pauses the game and brings up this map screen which shows the location of the different dinosaurs and aliens, along with the type of terrain on the island

WANNA PLAY DYNA BROTHERS?

FIRSTLY SELECT OPTIONS



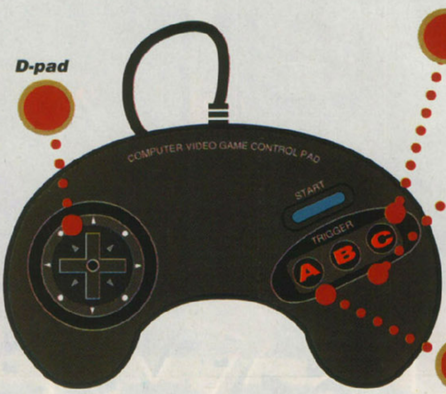
The top option selects which control goes with which button

The next is a sound test

The difficulty level. The default here is normal, press once to the left to get easy or once to the right to get hard

This allows you to exit

THE CONTROLS



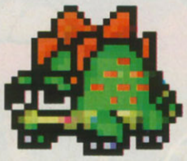
D-pad

Main selection button, use this to select icons or dinosaurs

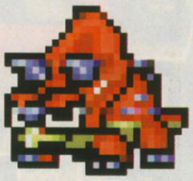
Cancels previous selection

Calls up tally of number of dinosaurs Vs number of aliens. Use in conjunction with the D-pad to move the view around the play area

VEGETARIAN



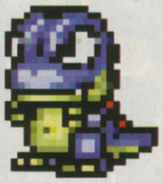
More sedate but a little tougher in a fight than the other veggie



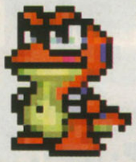
VEGETARIAN

Prone to wandering but the cheapest of all

MEAT-EATER

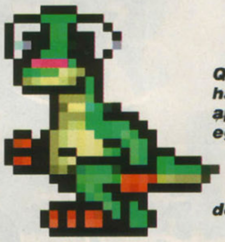


Roams the island looking for food



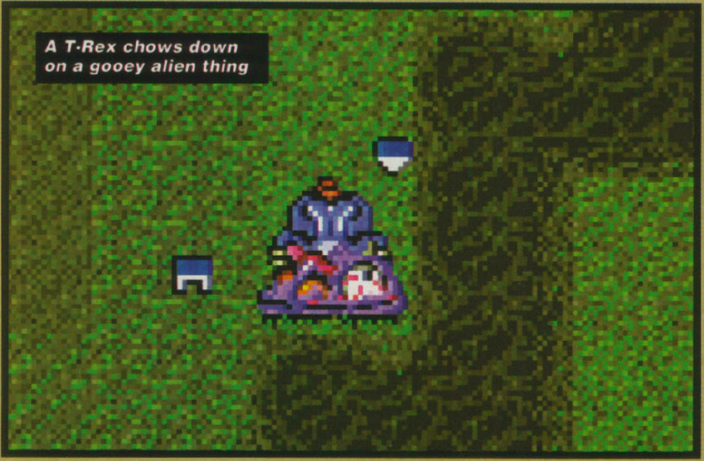
MEAT-EATER

Stays put and is tougher than the other. Best used to guard home-base



EGG-EATER

Quick moving and has a ravenous appetite for alien eggs (but will eat its own). Great for keeping the alien population down



A T-Rex chows down on a gooey alien thing

CONTINUED

carnivores and the final, most expensive one is an egg-eater.

Each of these has different behaviour patterns, so the choice of which eggs to lay and the effect of the cost are the first strategic decisions to be made.

Dinosaurs can be moved in two ways; the first is telling the whole lot of them to move in one of eight directions. This is more of a hint than a direct command.

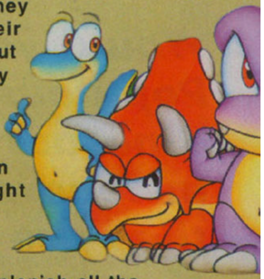
The next is to pick an individual dinosaur and give it an exact location to move to. A dinosaur will not falter from this path unless it rather stupidly falls into water and drowns en route.

MUTANT MONSTERS

Irradiating the dinosaur eggs gives the player the opportunity to change the species which is produced and although costly it is a good way of getting meat-eating troops to the front line.

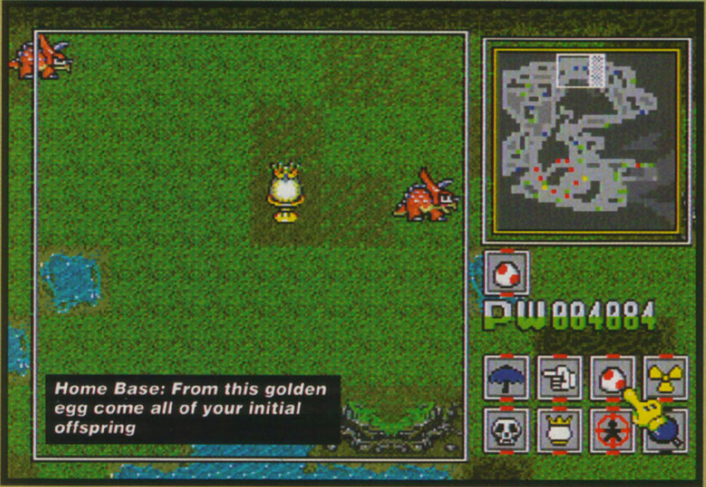
The nature of game means that the largest number of dinosaurs will be foraging vegetarians; they are the cheapest and they lay eggs like billy-oh. Sometimes changing one of their eggs to a T-Rex is one of the best stategies and in certain situations it can be life-saving.

Disasters are a little patchy in their effectiveness; the thunderstorm, is a bit naff and hardly worth bothering with, as are the heatwave and earthquake. The tidal wave and the firestorm are a lot more effective though but they cost an absolute packet.

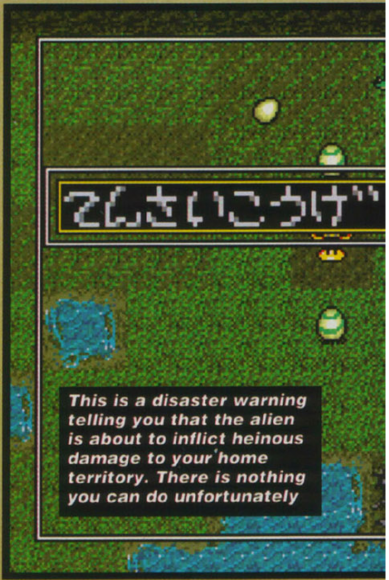


Dinosaurs must be kept fed at all times. They will find their own food, but occasionally you have to give them a push to send them in the right direction.

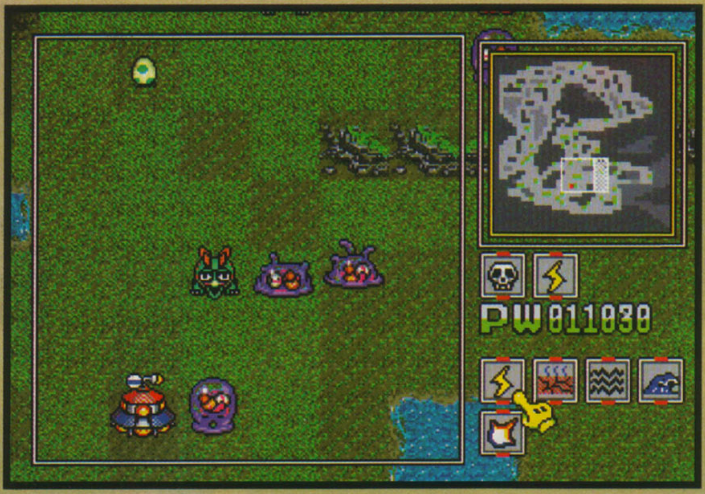
Veggies need a lot of rain to replenish all the grass they eat. If meat-eaters don't

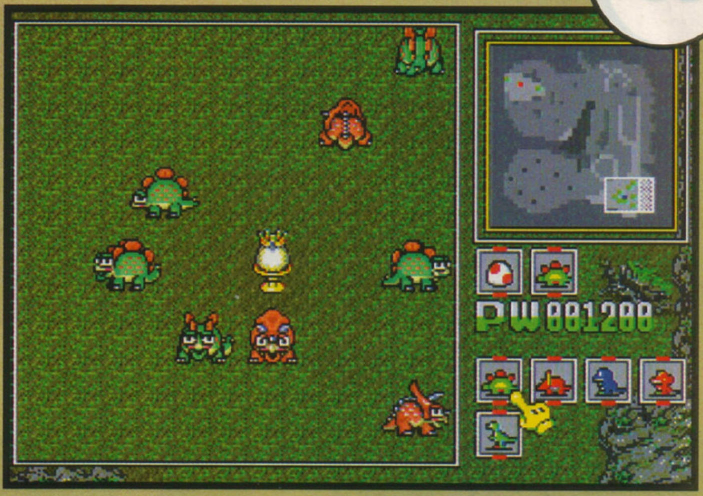


Home Base: From this golden egg come all of your initial offspring



This is a disaster warning telling you that the alien is about to inflict heinous damage to your home territory. There is nothing you can do unfortunately



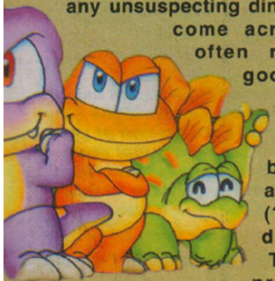


One of the veggies has wandered a bit far from home and happens across the alien mothership. It is unlikely it'll last very long

A good healthy supply of vegetarians is always the best way to start

find an alien to eat then they will turn and eat their own kind. Likewise egg-eaters will eat their own eggs. As more dinosaurs mean more power, it best not to create too many of the meat and egg-eaters until there is enough alien meat around to keep them happy.

Of course the aliens aren't just going to sit there and take this. Their meat-eaters forage for food and do their best to beat up and kill any unsuspecting dinosaur they come across. This often results in good fights, with the dinosaurs using the best martial arts moves (?) at their disposal! The victor proceeds to eat the vanquished.



These battles are superbly animated, right down to a dinosaur pausing to pant. The rest of the dinosaur graphics are all in that cute cartoon style, even the aliens only look gross in a cute way. They all have their own little mannerisms and they soon become quite endearing to an old softie like me.

This effect isn't sustained by the sound, there are beeps in all the right places to tell you if an option isn't available or if you have activated it, but the rest of the effects, like so many Jap games, consist of 8-bit sounding beeps and a crap tune.

FUN FACTOR

This just leaves the gameplay. It is a very good idea that works well at first and is damn good fun to play. The simple strategic battle makes for stimulating enjoyment, not quite chess, more a drafts with a few extra moves.

The difficulty curve is where it falls down though. On easy level a beginner can whistle through to stage six, then hit a brick wall as it becomes so hard. There is no curve really, which is frustrating and a big shame which tarnishes what could have been a brilliant game.

The final verdict on the game is that it is excellent...but only for an hour's amusement.

MEGA PANEL

SCORES OUT OF 10

STRATEGY

DYNA BROTHERS

ONE PLAYER

OVERALL SCORE 79%

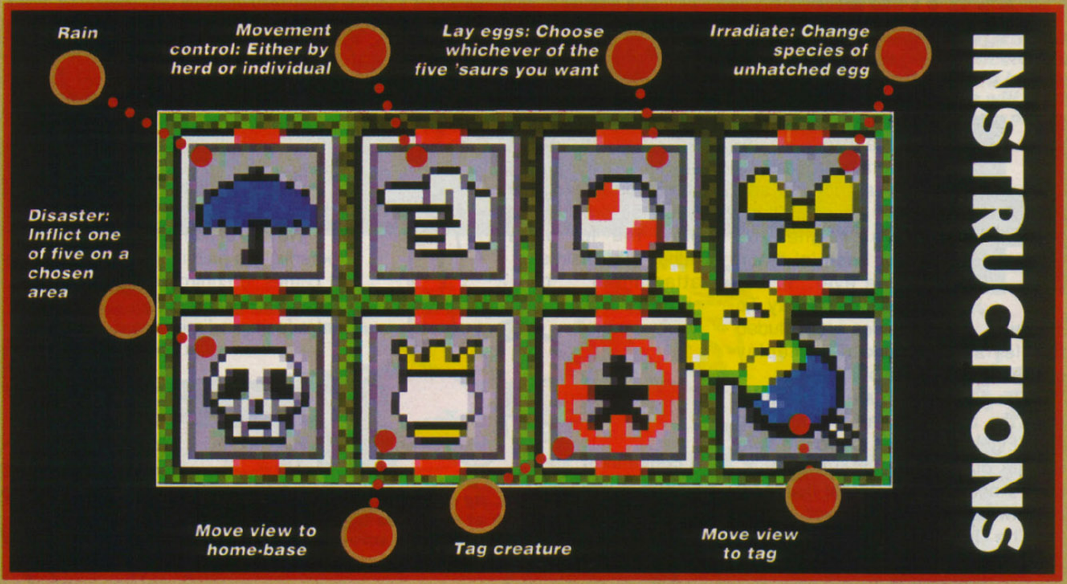
GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	6
PLAYABILITY	8
DURABILITY	7

UPPERS

- Cute, funny and endearing
- Simple, strategic gameplay

DOWNERS

- Sound is very simple
- Difficulty comes in like a brick wall


INSTRUCTIONS
Rain
Movement control: Either by herd or individual
Lay eggs: Choose whichever of the five 'saurs you want
Irradiate: Change species of unhatched egg
Disaster: Inflict one of five on a chosen area
Move view to home-base
Tag creature
Move view to tag

What should be included in the greatest ever beat'em-up? This was the question that set the team hypothesising about the ultimate game. This is what we came up with...

A LITTLE EXTRA

Turrican is jam-packed with cybernetic power-ups

Golden Axe II contains both a duel mode and full game

IT'S A FIS

FEATURE

Here it is chums, the ultimate beat'em-up! Ignoring programming restrictions and other boring stuff we have designed the best bash 'n' mash game ever...in our opinion anyway. To start with, two scenarios are included to alleviate the lack-of-gameplay problem that plagues beat'em-ups.

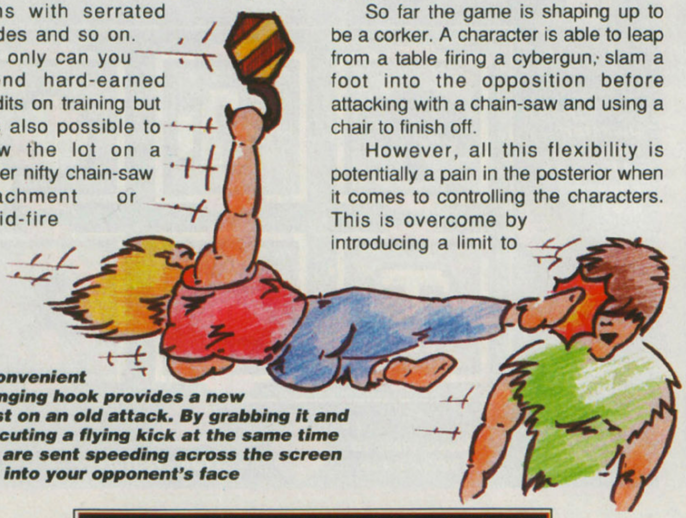
The first is a 'rescue the girlie from the bad guys' affair similar to Final Fight. In contrast to this is a one-on-one duel with a league system, there's not only a computer opponent but a two-player option as well.

The league is expanded by introducing honour and prestige; as you fight your character becomes more famous. To catch the attention of the big league fighters you have to win consistently because a major competitor would not dream of taking on a bar-room brawler.

A selection of eight characters is available, each with several basic attacks; punch, kick, block and so on. On top of this each roughie-toughie has a personalized move. Learning new attacks as the game progresses, for example the mighty kick and deadly leap, is another of our additions.

STREET TOUGH

Power-ups have been ignored in the genre so far, but by introducing cybernetics it is possible to replace arms with serrated blades and so on. Not only can you spend hard-earned credits on training but it is also possible to blow the lot on a rather nifty chain-saw attachment or rapid-fire cybergun. No two characters are the same in the ultimate beat'em-up.



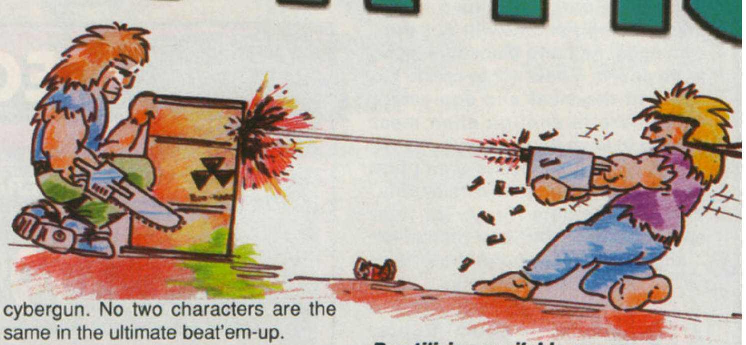
A convenient swinging hook provides a new twist on an old attack. By grabbing it and executing a flying kick at the same time you are sent speeding across the screen and into your opponent's face

To finish off the package a battery back-up or code system allows you to save your perfect puncher for use in a league bout or scenario game.

Many games have beautifully drawn backdrops but rarely do they affect the gameplay. In our game boxes could be thrown or used as cover, chains swung from and tables leapt off. Why just stand on a chair when you could use it to hit your opponent? With just a little imagination furniture fun could be had by everyone.

So far the game is shaping up to be a corker. A character is able to leap from a table firing a cybergun, slam a foot into the opposition before attacking with a chain-saw and using a chair to finish off.

However, all this flexibility is potentially a pain in the posterior when it comes to controlling the characters. This is overcome by introducing a limit to the number of options available for each character, intelligent programming and logical controls. A perfect example of this already in use is the Street Fighter II coin-op.



By utilizing available scenery as cover it is possible to avoid the more deadly attacks thrown at you by the opposition. The metal drum may stop a few shots but just think of the problems you'd have to face if it burst and spilt toxic waste

THE BODY SHOP

As we have already mentioned money gained by collecting tokens and winning fights can be used to purchase cybernetics, but what exactly is available?

A forearm gun provides a ranged attack, blades add to your punch, synthetic muscles help with strength, body-plating absorbs damage and then there are reflex boosters and pain blockers to consider. Every discerning street warrior should have a little metal replacing some meat.

To avoid the invincible warrior syndrome each option has a side-effect. Machine-guns are useful but they slow you down, body armour restricts movement and wires in your brain cause blackout problems. Nasty stuff, but it's all good fun.

Finally, injuries have some

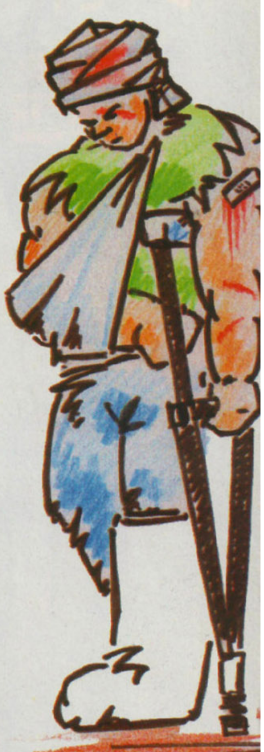
DJ Boy offers something new by going skate crazy

Pit Fighter permits the use of scenery as weapons

The Street Fighter II coin-op has a huge number of moves

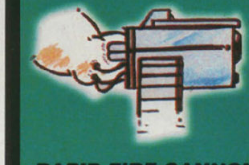
Fighting Masters stars robots that can be 'powered up'

T FIGHT

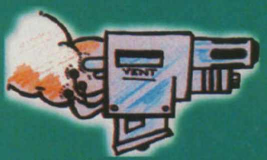


Fighting is dangerous and you are bound to get hurt. Take too many hits to the head and you may blackout, walking will become difficult if you fracture a leg bone and a broken arm will really give you a problem punching

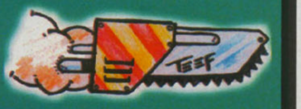
POWER UP



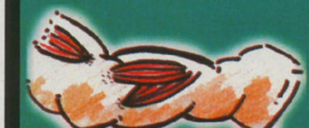
RAPID FIRE CANNON
Let rip with a stream of 9mm bullets



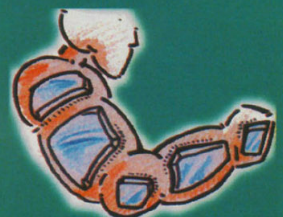
HIGH POWER BLASTER
Large calibre slugs inflict horrendous damage



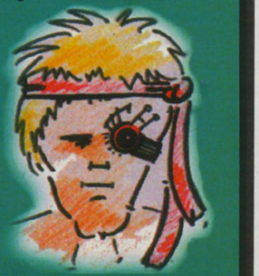
BUZZ SAW
Give your fist some bite



SYNTHETIC MYOMAR MUSCLE
Increase your hitting power



DERMAL ARMOUR
Cover your body with kevlar-plating

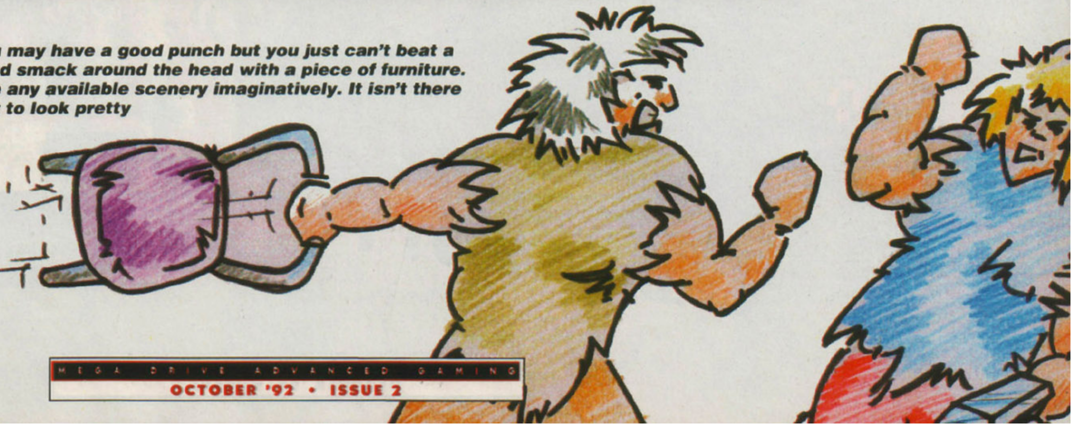


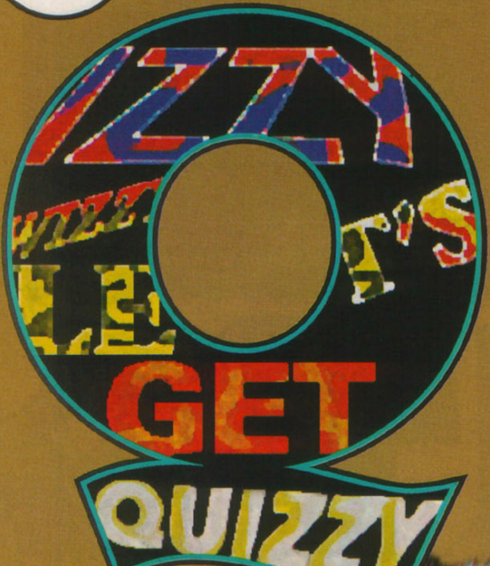
REFLEX LINKED TARGETTING
Increase hitting accuracy

relevant effect. Repeated hits to the legs reduce your speed, head wounds cause knock-outs and broken arms hamper punching performance. Over a period of time the injuries heal allowing you to return to full fighting potential but the memory of your mistakes is never far away.

The major concept behind the ultimate beat'em-up is variety. There are enough special oojamaflips to add flavour to the fighting. Gameplay and longevity are enhanced by the fact that everytime your opponent comes up with a new attack you will have to find a weak point and counter with your own offensive.

You may have a good punch but you just can't beat a good smack around the head with a piece of furniture. Use any available scenery imaginatively. It isn't there just to look pretty





A grand's worth of games including Thunder Force IV, Gley Lancer, Taz-Mania and Chuck Rock up for grabs.

W

£1,000 WORTH OF

Yep, win some of the latest Mega Drive games just by answering a couple of well easy questions in our staggering phone competition. There is a first prize of 10 of the latest Mega Drive carts worth £400 and 15 runners-up who will all get themselves a game.

Only a complete noncecase would have trouble with this compo, it's so easy.

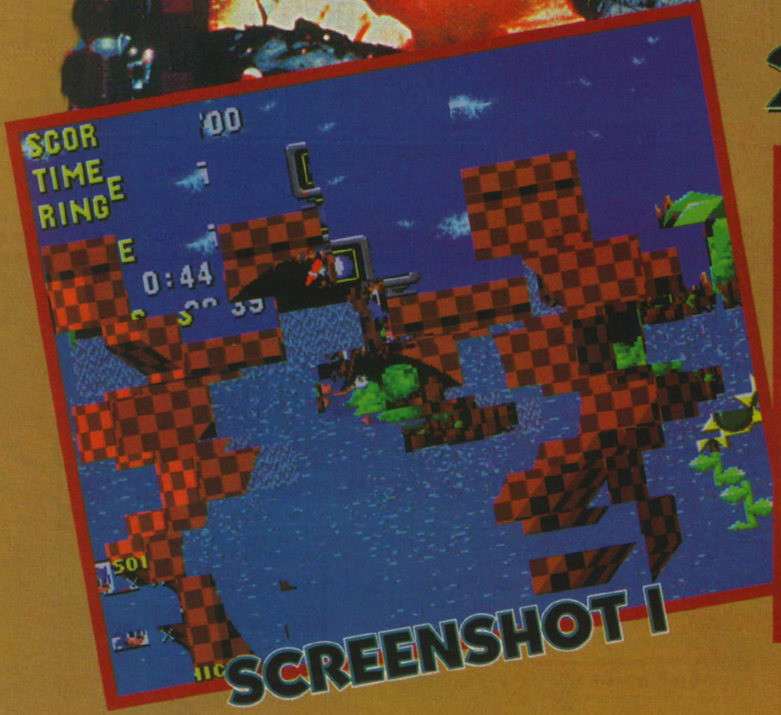
JUST DIAL THIS NUMBER...

0891 212720

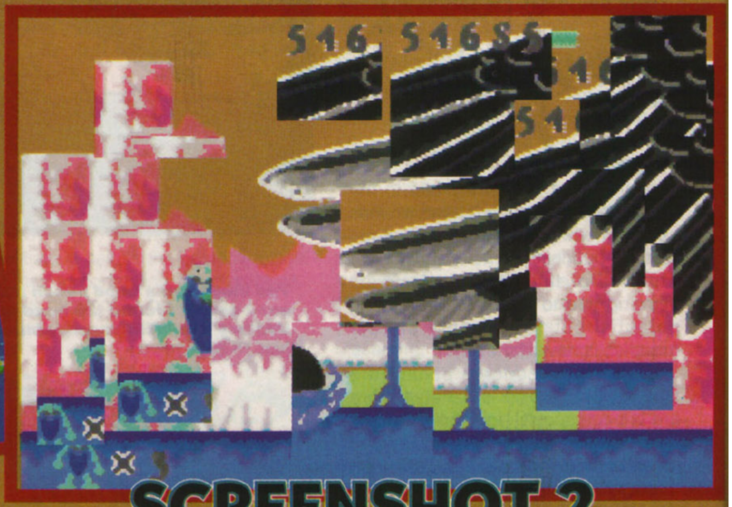
Then just listen to the message and these two questions…

Q1 This is dead easy if you've got half a brain, so no help I'm afraid!

Q2 Noticed the three buggered up screenshots below? Take a gander at 'em and decide what game each one comes from. You'll be given three choices

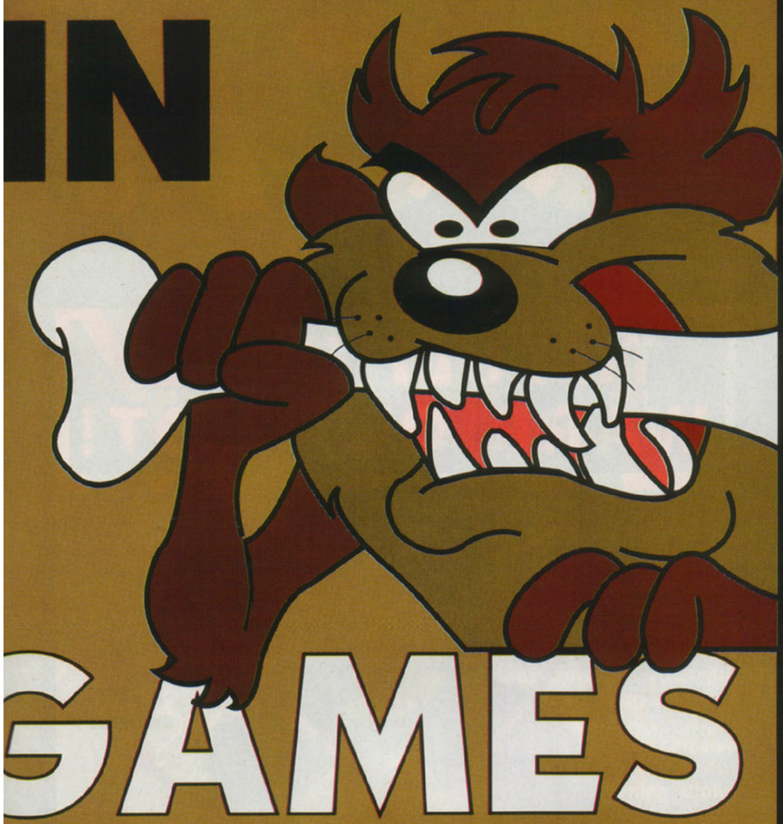


SCREENSHOT 1



SCREENSHOT 2

IN GAMES



on the phone and all you have to do is say which one you think it is.

The bad news is that you'll need to be reasonably intelligent and possibly half awake to be able to answer this particular question!

WHAT NEXT?

The names of the people who answered ALL of the questions correctly will be put in a hat (well not a real hat – it's metaphorical) and the first-prize winner will be the first name pulled out of the aforementioned headgear. This lucky person will have a total of 10 games sent to them, while runners-up prizes of single games will be sent to 15 further people.

If you're not the person who pays the phone bill please don't forget to ask the permission of whoever does before you enter the competition. So off you go – go on, ask away. Someone will find out if you don't!

Calls cost 36p (cheap rate), 48p (at all other times) and the approximate length of a call is 2.5 minutes.

SCREENSHOT 3

MANGA MANIA

Win 10 copies of Manga Video's latest masterpiece - Dominion. Plus five Manga T-shirts.

Manga video is the company that distributes those rather nifty Japanese videos. You know the ones don't you? The doofers that have all the big hairy chaps with massive muscles and the girlies with big knockers on the cassette covers.

Manga is currently putting out a couple of vids under the moniker of Dominion – Tank Police. These animated adventures take you to the year 2010 where the genetically mutated cat sisters, Annapuna and Unipuma team up with half- cyborg gang leader, Buaka. The mission is to infiltrate a hospital and steal urine samples of people unaffected by the toxic atmosphere.

Weird eh? Talk about taking the piss! I bet you're wondering what happens aren't you? Well, to find out simply enter our competition by answering these questions...

1 What was the first Japanese feature film to be distributed by Manga/Island World Communication in the UK?

A: Alpha
B: Akira
C: Atora

2 Which of the following was one of the earliest Japanese cartoons to be broadcast as a series on British telly?

A: Battle of the Planets
B: Planet of the Bug Eyed Nubile Wenches from Hell
C: He-Man and the Masters of the Universe

3 What is the name of the director of Dominion?

A:Creamov Sumyoung
B: Itchycraka Inanika
C: Koichi Mashimo

These vids are rated 15 by the BBFC, so only enter if you're old enough. Write to: I'm old enough – honest! *MAG*,
Maverick Magazines,
Waters Green Hse,
Waters Green,
Macclesfield
SK11 6LF.

APOCA

The exciting hobby of Lazer Tag has now taken a firm grip on the UK. Game centres around the country will equip you and a group of friends with hi-tech zap guns and send you into an apocalyptic urban maze. Here's the low-down on this maniacal pastime and tells you how to get involved.

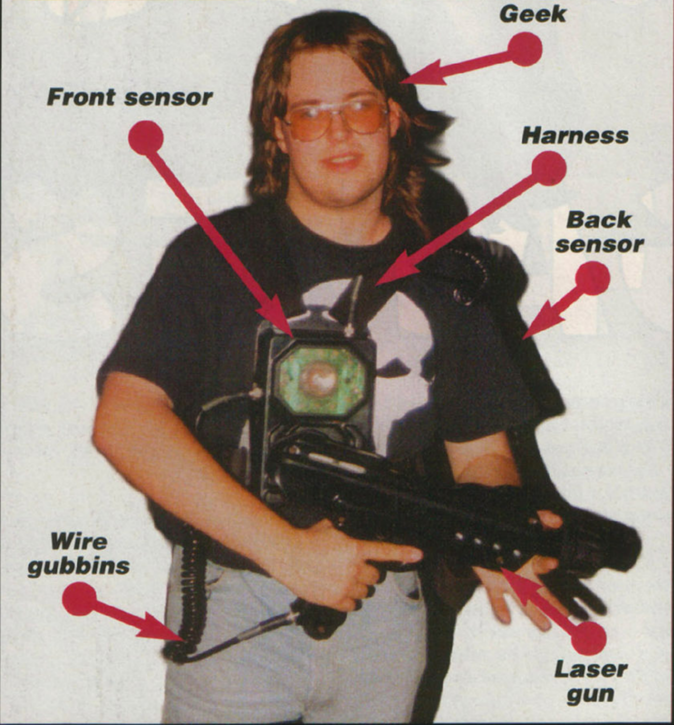
FEATURE

The opportunity to shoot your friends without being imprisoned is something that most people would jump at. Lazer Tag provides you with the chance to vent all your frustrations without any possibility of recrimination.

The concept behind Laser Tag or Quasar is an extremely old one. I bet you remember playing cowboys and indians when you were younger! This is basically the same thing. TSR marketed its original Lazer Tag equipment, which used the same technology as that found in remote controls, way back in 1987. Over the next few years it was ripped off by many copycat companies.

Around the turn of the decade the first dedicated centre appeared. It replaced cap-guns with sophisticated lasers, sensors substituted cries of "I got you first" and instead of playing in the streets, a custom-built maze was made available. Sounds fun!

THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR – NOT!



BRIGHT LIGHTS

Each centre has a slightly different game format but they all follow a similar line-up. You are provided with a gun and sensor harness and the players are divided into equally matched teams.

Tension builds as the competitors are ushered through a grimy airlock into the play area. Music from the Terminator movies plays in the background but this is nothing compared to boom of your heart beating rapidly.

Suddenly all hell breaks loose as the action begins. The combination of darkness, smoke and flashing strobe lights leaves you totally disorientated.

Stumbling about you find a convenient graffiti-covered wall to shelter behind and try to get your bearings. Shouts and laser blasts can be heard up ahead, groping around you slowly make your way forwards.

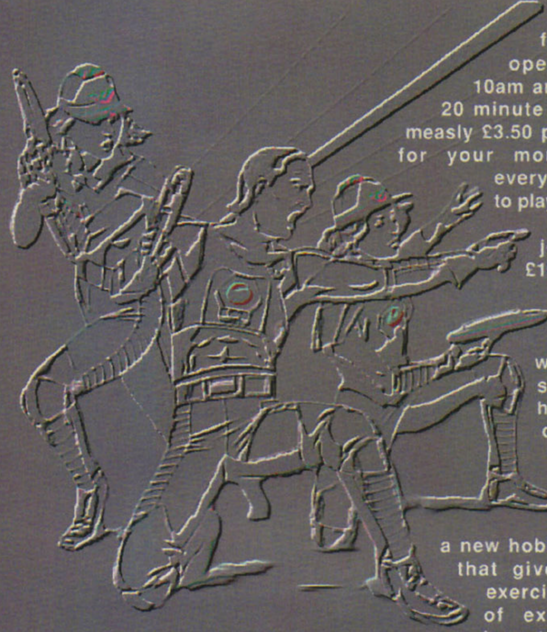
Without warning razor thin, bright red laser beams cut through the fog and flash over the concrete beside you. You dive for cover and search the gloom for the enemy. Spying the tell-tale lights of a sensor harness you take aim and let rip. A laser beam streaks away towards your target; a hit is scored.

You are rewarded when your opponent's gun is deactivated. It will be re-energized in 10 seconds so you sprint forward to make as much use of the time as possible. The game has been running for 30 seconds, you have had your first elimination and sweat pours from your body, but the feeling of exhaltation is incredible.

Each game lasts for around 15 to 20 minutes at the end of which

LASER WEAPONS FULLY CHARGED, LABYRINTH READY FOR ACTION, ONLY ONE MORE THING NEEDED...
...AND YOU'D BETTER NOT BE LATE.
LASER QUEST
THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE FOR MERE HUMANS.

YPSE NOW



points are awarded for scoring hits on the opposition. Totals are given both for individuals and for the whole team. By examining several printouts you will be able to see how you have progressed over several encounters.

BIG CITY

At the moment the largest chain of centres goes by the name of Quasar. It has franchises in most cities and a few large towns. Additionally there are several independent establishments dotted around the country that will be able to quench your thirst for action. To track them down look in the leisure section of your local Yellow Pages.

We visited the Laser Quest centre in Manchester and this is what we found. They are open between 10am and 10pm. Each 20 minute game costs a measly £3.50 per person and for your money you get everything required to play.

You can also join a club for £10 which allows you to play at a cheaper rate. You will find that some centres have a slightly different pricing or discount system.

So if you're after a new hobby, something that gives you some exercise with plenty of excitement get down to your nearest Quasar or Laser Quest centre and join in the fun.

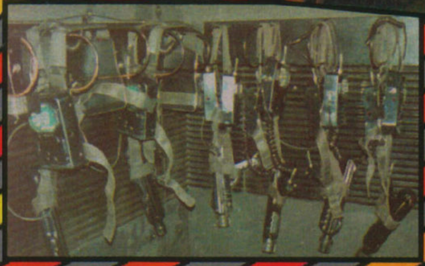
We would like to thank Laser Quest for helping with this article. It's found at Arch 58, Whitworth St West, Manchester. Tel: 061 228 2231.

LASER QUEST

FUTURE WARS

What a pair of hardened street warriors. With reflexes faster than lightning they take to the battlefield. "Beware all you geeks because we're gonna hunt you down!"

Peering through the gloom and smoke our hero spies some targets. Take that you girlies! "Am I good at this or what?"



Bloody hell! This looks so much like a scene from the movie, Aliens I nearly crapped my pants! Just think of the fun you could have with those zappers

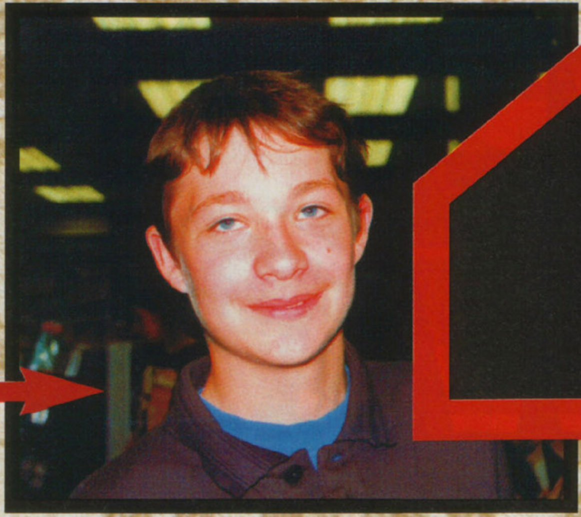
EXCUSE ME!..

Look, I like all this running around shooting stuff as much as the next person, but why oh why are these things always biased against the hard of seeing. First it was paintballing where I couldn't put the goggles on over my glasses and now it's red and green lights! Being a little colour-blind I found it darn near impossible to work out who was on my side and who wasn't. I ended up shooting Jason and then walking up to one of the opposition with a big grin and being blown away! Equal rights for the colour-blind and short-sighted that's what I say!

OOP YER WAY

Can your average Mega Drive owner afford to spend £40 for a game on a regular basis? We visited Game in Manchester's Arndale Centre to find out how you feel about the subject.

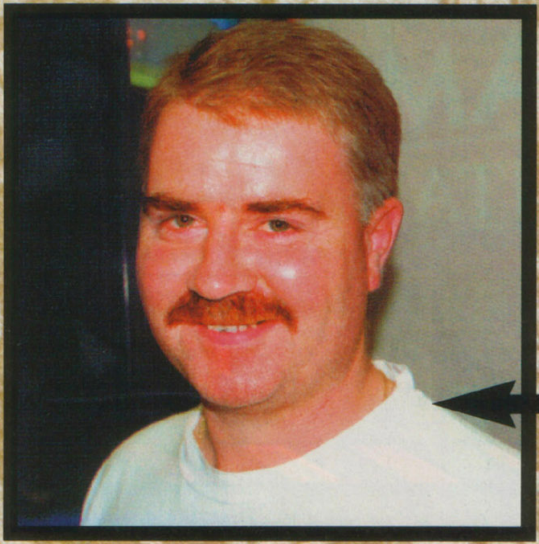
Steven Laines



Not an especially talkative chap, but then we can't all be David Frost can we? He kept repeating that Mega Drive game prices were "too dear, too dear", but despite this he still gritted his teeth to buy one a month.

There seemed to be a similar concept here as the compact disc price debate raging in the music industry. Steven felt that excessive profiteering was taking place. "Games should be a lot cheaper considering what they're making them at." Quite where he got this idea from I don't know but if it spreads it could be very damaging for Sega's image.

Anthony Church



One of the older generation of Mega Drive users at 32 years old, and of the age when disposable income is often not as bountiful as it once was with a lot of things around the house taking priority over Mega Drive games. What about the cost then? "A bit pricey, the quality's alright, but they're still a bit pricey."

He went on to prove that he doesn't throw his money about. "Obviously at 40 quid a throw you're only going to buy so many a year, and at the end of the day you've got to be careful what you buy. So I read the reviews, see what the mags think are good, you know!"

He said he'd rent if there was a shop near to him and use this as a another way of evaluating whether a game was worth buying.

Paul Lockett

Paul is obviously something of an accomplished games player, probably better than most of us in the office. Like the rest of the sensible people we talked to he makes sure he knows what he's getting before buying it, to avoid the crap.

"No I don't mind paying. You know, I buy all the magazines every month and read the reviews to try and suss out which is the best game. I've just bought that Taz-Mania, it is a very good game. I finished it last night, and I only bought it about three days ago."

I asked him whether he found this a problem or not. "No I like a game that I can finish. Like with Kid Chameleon I play it for four or five hours then get to the same point and I can't get any further, I just get bored and feel I haven't got my money's worth."

Stu Johnstone

He's only had his machine for a few days and the first game he bought was World Cup Italia 90 at £19.99 which he sees, along with Sonic, as keeping him going for a while anyway.

"I think the £20 games are a great idea and that's the way it should go. New releases should have a premium on them, but old games should be discounted quite heavily."

He feels that the "premium" on full price games is a little over the top, "I think it's ridiculous". But like others he is aware that not every game is a good one and is wise to check out what's available. "I've just joined a place that rents carts, and I will rent before I buy because software is so expensive."

Oh, by the way. thanks for the life story Stu. Fascinating!

This month: GAME, Manchester

Jamie Tassel, the manager, isn't about to say how he thinks Mega Drive carts are outrageously expensive – he likes his job – but he did say that he was "surprised at the amount of people who can afford to spend their £40 on enough of a regular basis to make our sales figures what they are".

There are no plans at the moment to go into rental. Game feels its floorspace will earn more money if it is full of saleable stock rather than being tied down to the high stocks needed for even a low return from rental.

Simeon Collins

Another mature Mega Drive owner who is more than aware of the pressures on any adult's pocket. The demands made by many other things are far more important on an income than a game. "I think they are expensive, it gets to the point where you're only getting them for birthday and Christmas presents."

He said he'd rather pay £40 for a very good game than £20 for an average one that was essentially two years old. The natural corollary of this is to be careful of what you're buying as the majority of the participants have shown. "I'd definitely rent carts. I've only just got the machine you see and don't know much about the games so it makes sense to go and rent the carts before I buy them. I don't want to go buying it for 40 quid and find out I don't like it or it's no good."

Paul Gallagher

Unfortunately this young man was not entirely enamoured with the whole Mega Drive scene. He found the prices "a tad too high really," feeling that "about 30 quid would be about right". But despite his reservations he still manages to stump up the 40 smackers once a month.

As far as the budget market went, he was less than impressed. "It's no good really because they're giving low prices to the games that aren't really very good." Clearly a very angry young man.

Kevin Price

In his early twenties Kevin grew up as part of the video game generation, but he is more than aware that £40 is a lot different to the £5 he paid for Spectrum games. "I can afford them, but they are bloody expensive, you've got to save the money for them. They've got to be excellent games to represent good value. It's OK if you're earning a lot of money, but not everyone's got an extremely well-paid job."

Obviously Kevin can afford to spend more than others. "I buy about two a month at the most, but I'll only buy one if it gets extremely good reviews."

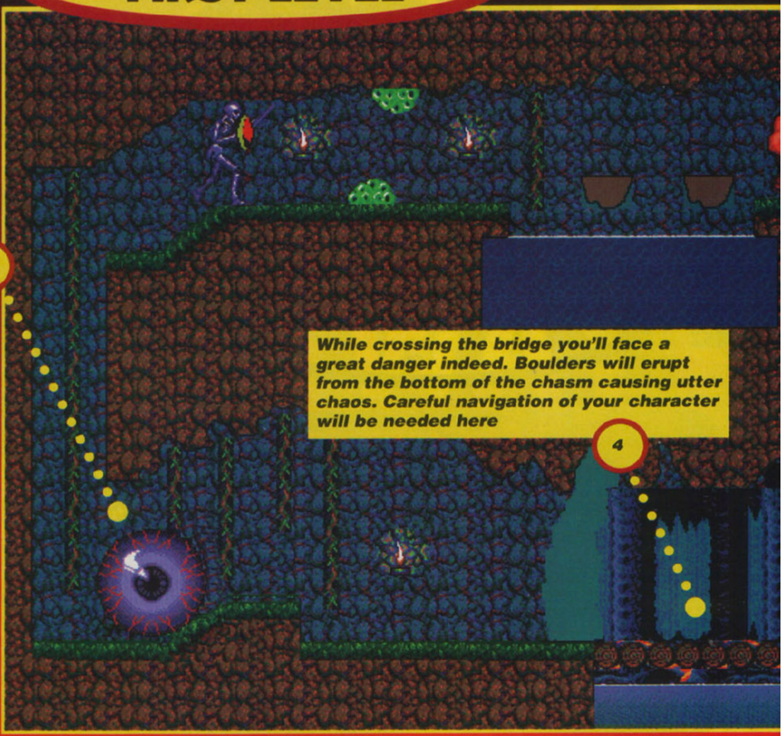
What about the cheap ones though? "Some of these budget ones, I mean it's a good idea but they're not the best games are they? Some of them are definitely the worst."

CADASH

The champion cartographer returns once again. This time to proudly reveal the true secrets of Cadash. Each of the levels has been mapped in detail so just follow the numbers in order and the end of the game will soon be within your reach. Well, maybe!

DAVE

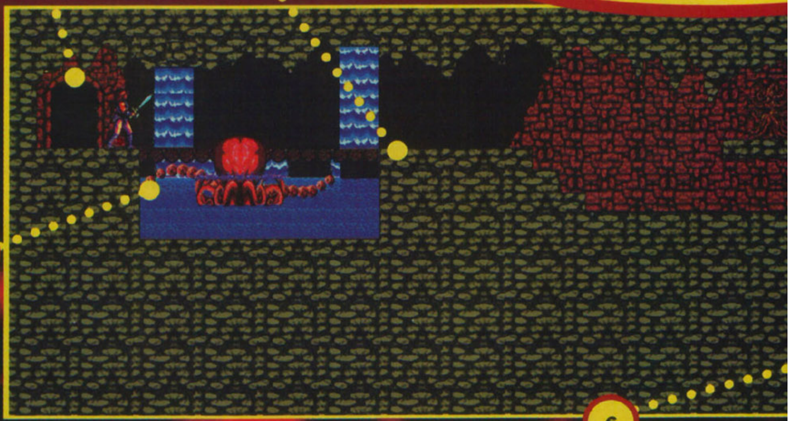
FIRST LEVEL



3 *While travelling through this particular part of the caves evil eyes will appear without warning and proceed to attack. Unfortunately spells and weapons can't harm them, so the only choice left open is to avoid them by climbing up the vines*

4 **While crossing the bridge you'll face a great danger indeed. Boulders will erupt from the bottom of the chasm causing utter chaos. Careful navigation of your character will be needed here**

THIRD LEV



2 *When the krakken decides to raise its grotesque head get ready to dodge the oncoming balls of energy. Try to stay as near as possible because the only way to harm it is to remove its tentacles*

3 *Release the girl from her bonds and then follow her to the springs at loc 4*

5 *Moving on now you'll need to go though this door which leads to loc 6*

6 *Walk right while dodging the swinging spiked balls at loc 7. Then take a plunge into the murky depths and swim to loc 8*

TIPPITY TOES

More tips for you this month from games both old and new. If any of you 'orrible lot happen to have any decent tips or cheats up your sleeves (or anywhere else for that matter) feel free to drop us a line at Tippity Toes, Mega Drive Advanced Gaming, Maverick Magazines, Waters Green House, Waters Green, Macclesfield SK11 6LF.

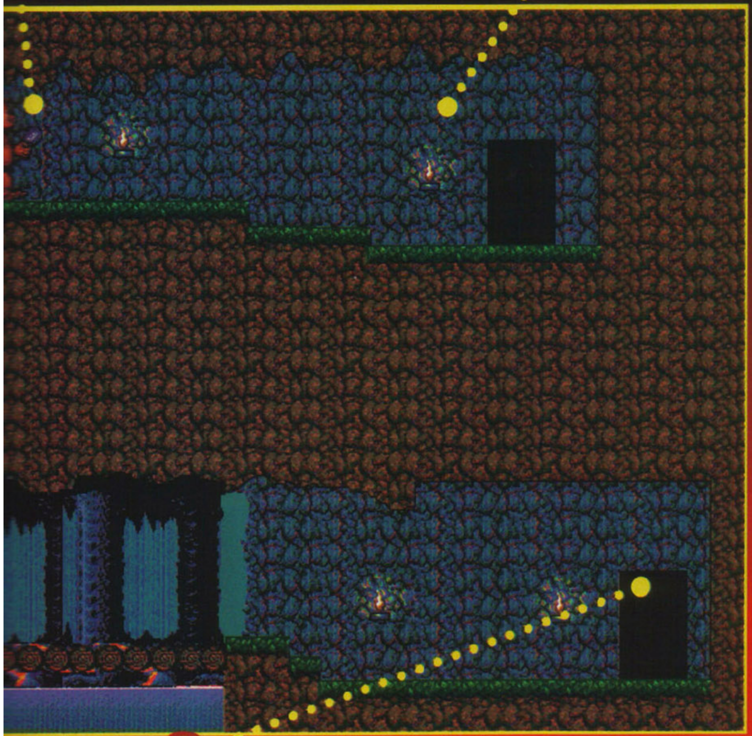
DESERT STRIKE

Many of you will know the codes for all the levels on Desert Strike, but did you know that you could activate a cheat by using the code **TQQQLOM**? Well, you do now. Simply whap down these letters to start the game with five lives instead of two.

ALISIA DRAGOON

2 In the beginning stages of the caves, hogmen will attack. However they're incredibly weak. So it's good practice to stay near this area to increase your level rating and also accumulate large quantities of gold

1 After having heard a cry for help from the king at the Castle of Dirzar, you move on without hesitation to the first of the six caves. The objective here is to reach the next doorway at loc 5

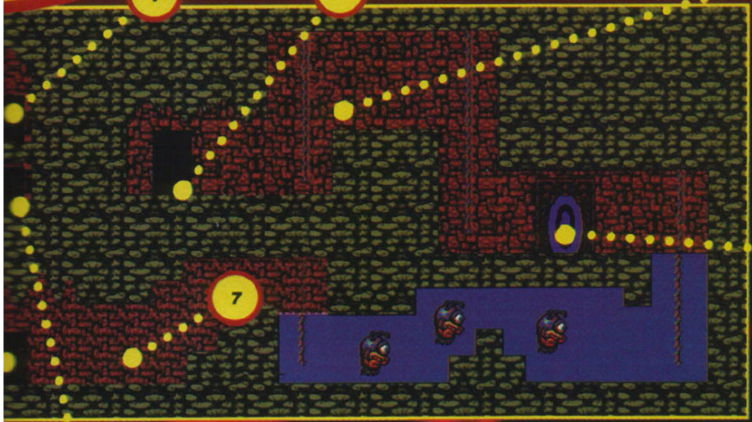


5 Walk through the door into the lair of the dreaded black pudding! To destroy this foul obscenity, simply walk up to it and lunge, then retreat. When it leaps onto the ceiling just dodge the falling black balls and when the pudding falls back down, just repeat the process

1 Rush over to loc 2

To loc 4 second level

8 Step into the portal here. Once you've recovered from the experience of magical travel you'll be in the Forest of the Gnomes

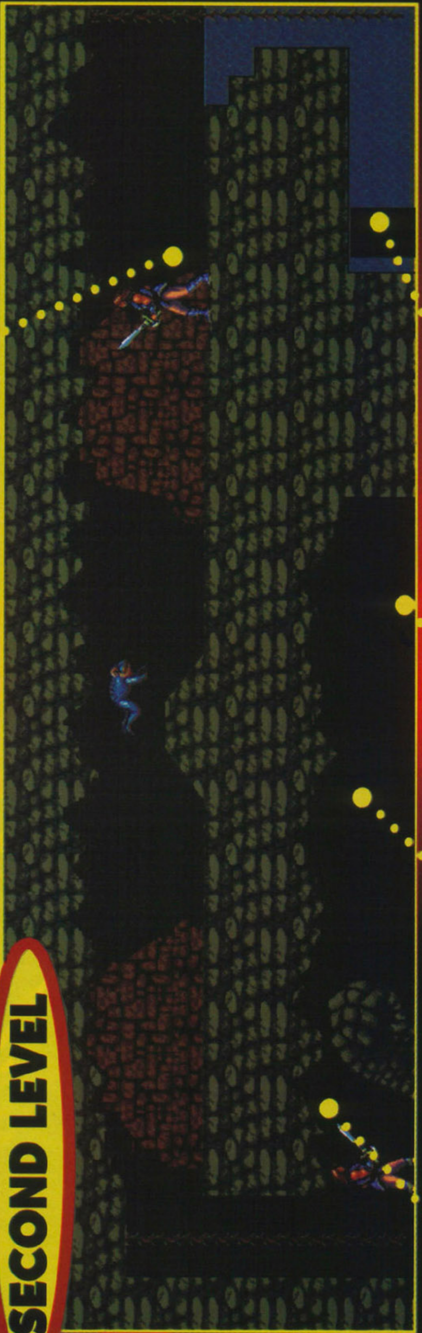


An armoury is located here. It is advisable to upgrade your equipment

7

4 Now that the girl has revealed her true identity she'll give you a mermaid scale. Now you're able to move underwater without being harmed

SECOND LEVEL



1 From here you'll need to proceed to loc 3. But be warned, it's not all that easy

To loc 10 on the Krakken level

4 This leads to loc 1 in Krakken

3 Be on guard for the killer bees here

2 Make sure that you're familiar with the stone hands

Although a very popular game, this platform shoot'em-up is certainly a trifle frustrating when you start moving into the later levels. If you're having trouble though, help is at hand with this enormous cheat.

Wait for the Sega logo to appear then hold down button A until the Game Arts logo is on screen. Next hold down button B until Gainax disappears, now hold C until the prompt 'Music composed by...' appears. When the stars begin coming out of the crystal press Start. There will now be a short sound to indicate that the cheat is activated. Now, while playing, you can do any of the following by pressing button C on pad 2 then...

C (pad 2) – stage 1
B (pad 2) – stage 2
BC (pad 2) – stage 3
A (pad 2) – stage 4
AC (pad 2) – stage 5
AB (pad 2) – stage 6
ABC (pad 2) – stage 7
Start (pad 2) – stage 8

While playing press A, then...

Up (pad 1) – To maximise hit points
Left (pad 1) B (pad 2) – To raise lightning level
Right (pad 1) B(pad 2) – To raise monster power level
Lightning (pad 1) B (pad 2) – To power up lightning
A (pad 1) B(pad 2) – For immortality

TWO CRUDE DUDES

Fairly obvious one when you think about it. All you have to do is select a two-player game and then use player two as a weapon. Lob him at the enemies to flatten them, and keep continuing his game when he dies. A guaranteed weapon ensured throughout the game!

THE WORM

The worm must be killed in order to obtain the silk. Once it's been obtained rush off to the high cliff

THE MAGICAL DRAGON

A rare guardian this one. It'll only appear on the last level. Beware of its amazing abilities. A few swipes with your trusty weapon will soon sort this geek out

FIRE LORD

A fearsome opponent indeed. It may be found in the later stages of the game. Beware of the fireball attack

THE EVIL EYE

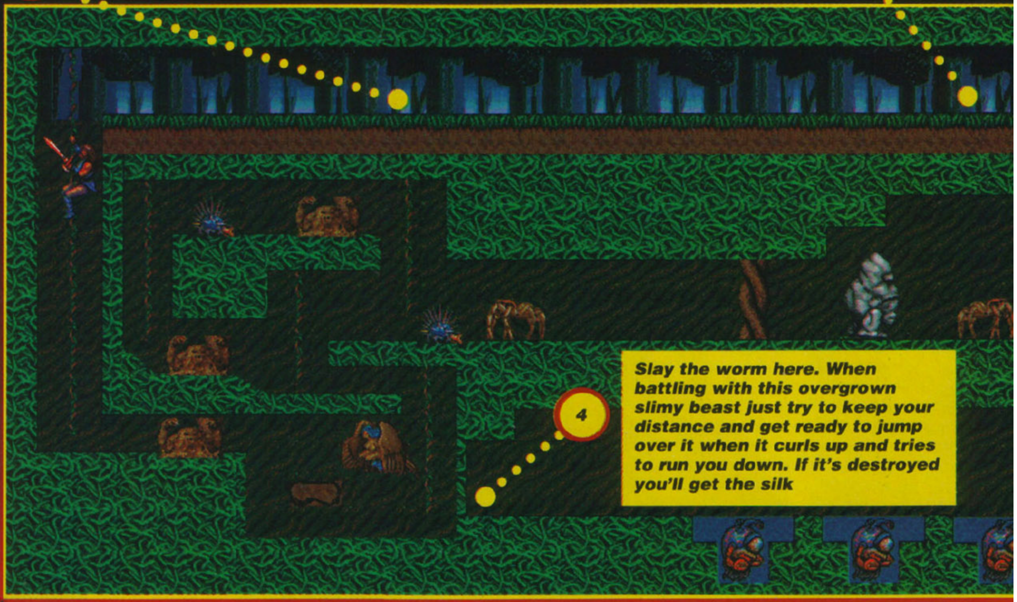
Since the eye is impervious to attacks avoid its evil gaze

THE GIANT SPIDER

This is no ordinary spider – it's six foot long. It attcks twice, first with a poisonous web to engulf its enemy and then it gnaws on the victim

THE PRINCESS

The cause behind your quest is this beautiful little bint. However, at the end you choose not to stay with her



6 The lilliput orchid is found here. After consuming this rare plant you'll shrink to the size of a gnome! Don't worry though, it's not permanent

7 Stock up on weapons at the armoury

4 Slay the worm here. When battling with this overgrown slimy beast just try to keep your distance and get ready to jump over it when it curls up and tries to run you down. If it's destroyed you'll get the silk

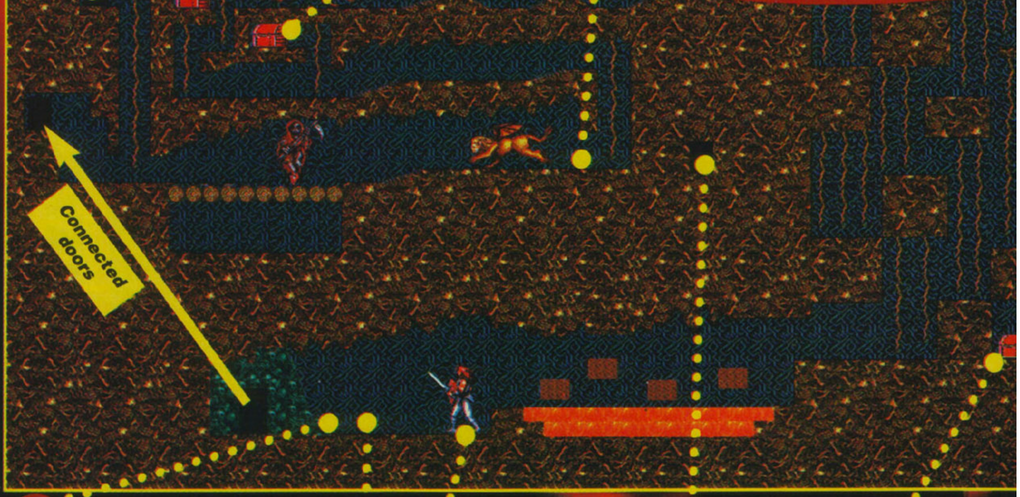
1 At the other side move left to the entrance to the third cave – stopping to talk to someone in a grave! You'll find yourself inside a town for the people who escaped the nightmare above

3 Pick up a chest containing herbs, money or antidotes here

4 Pick up a chest here

2 The dog you saw on the surface will promptly arrive. But this is no ordinary dog, no! For this is Lassie's cousin. Unfortunately you can't understand a single woof at this moment in time

FIFTH LEVEL



8 Pop in to see Abel's widow. She'll give you a pendant to place on Abel's grave. Head off to the surface and once you've laid the pendant on the grave Abel will speak and give you a special charm. You can now understand animals.
Return underground to see Lassie's cousin at loc 2. Here the dog will inform you of the dreaded bandits at loc 9

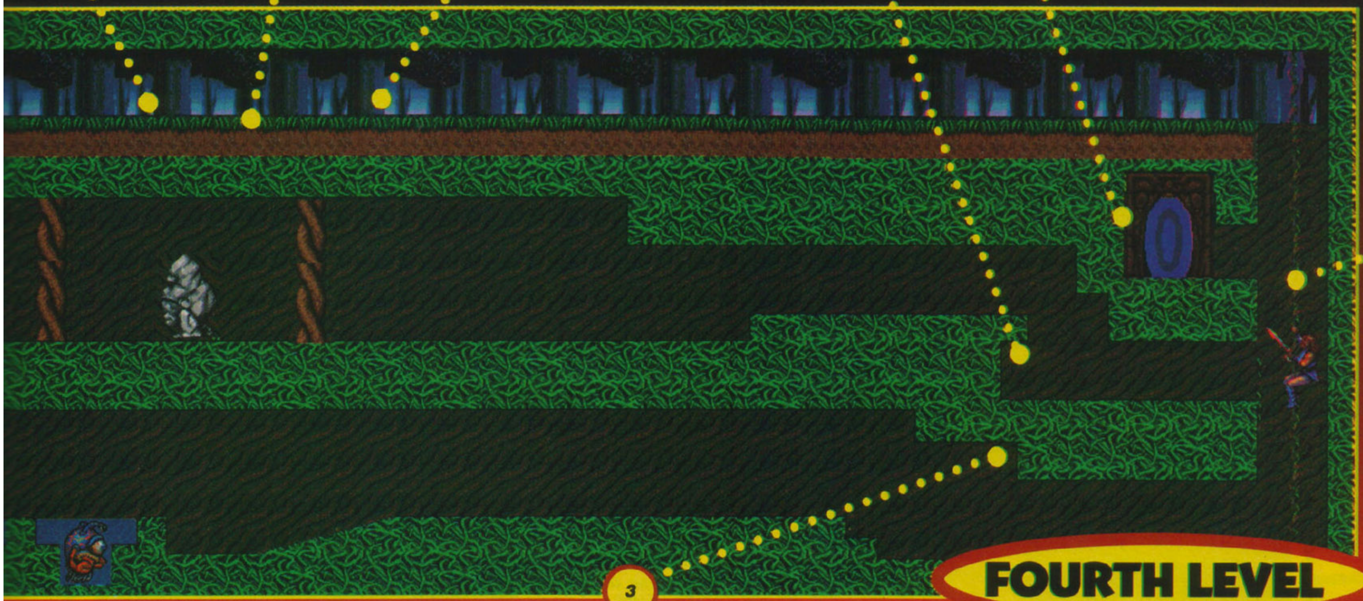
6 Recuperate at the inn

7 Obtain better weapons at the armoury

9 At loc 9 a massive fire elemental is located. To vanquish this guardian just keep hacking at it. As it explodes dodge the fireballs. Then get ready to repeat this as it regenerates.
Before long you should find the silver flute. Take this back to the surface on the far right. Then onward to Castle Cadash!

5 Pick up a chest here

FOURTH LEVEL



8 The inn where a well needed rest is available

10 Leave via this portal in the shop

9 An empty house which isn't important

5 Climb up onto the ledge here

1 Entrance

2 Climb down the vine

3 The gnome settlement. At the far left of the screen there'll be an apothecary where you can stock up on herbs and potions

FINAL LEVEL

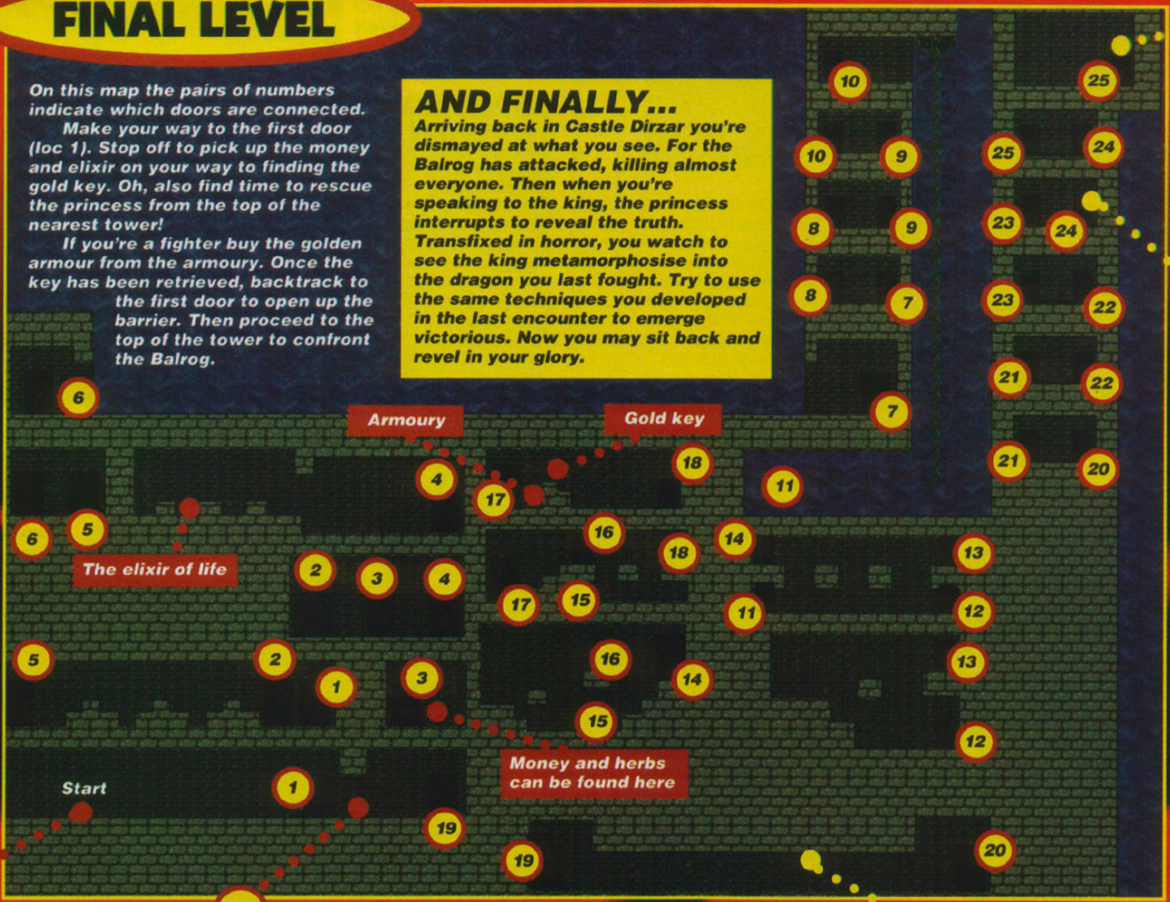
On this map the pairs of numbers indicate which doors are connected.

Make your way to the first door (loc 1). Stop off to pick up the money and elixir on your way to finding the gold key. Oh, also find time to rescue the princess from the top of the nearest tower!

If you're a fighter buy the golden armour from the armoury. Once the key has been retrieved, backtrack to the first door to open up the barrier. Then proceed to the top of the tower to confront the Balrog.

AND FINALLY...

Arriving back in Castle Dirzar you're dismayed at what you see. For the Balrog has attacked, killing almost everyone. Then when you're speaking to the king, the princess interrupts to reveal the truth. Transfixed in horror, you watch to see the king metamorphosise into the dragon you last fought. Try to use the same techniques you developed in the last encounter to emerge victorious. Now you may sit back and revel in your glory.



After the tiring journey to the top of the citadel you'll be confronted by the Balrog

A relentless journey reveals two of the most hardened enemies. Inside this tower resides the cave worm's brother and the black pudding's sister, the purple pudding. Try to use the same tactics as before. But be warned, for you'll now be fighting in a very restricted place

The gold key will need to be retrieved from loc 6 to open the barrier

If you still find this a little hard to complete and you've obtained a Replay cartridge. Then enter this handy little code to become invulnerable: FF0E510030. Catch you later!

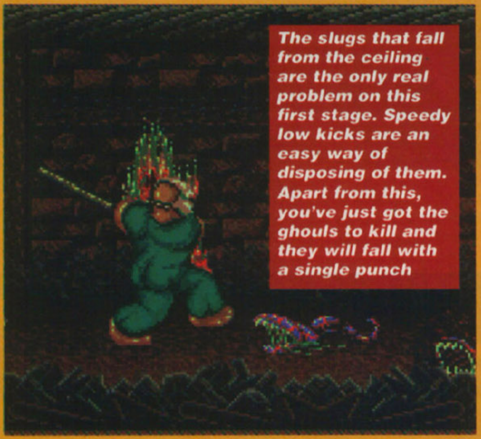
While travelling through this passageway, evil eyes will attack. Simply jump into the gaps at the bottom of the screen

SPLATTERHOUSE II

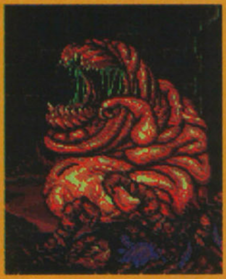
This gruesome game from Sega is quite tough if you don't know what tactics to use. This is a collection of tips to take you to the end.

JOHN

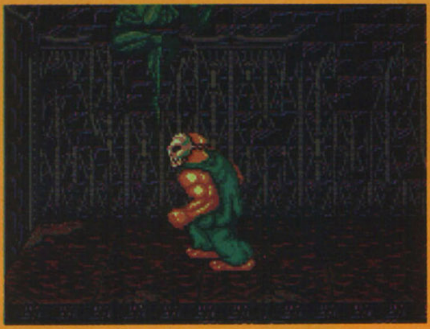
STAGE 1 – THE HAUNTED FOREST

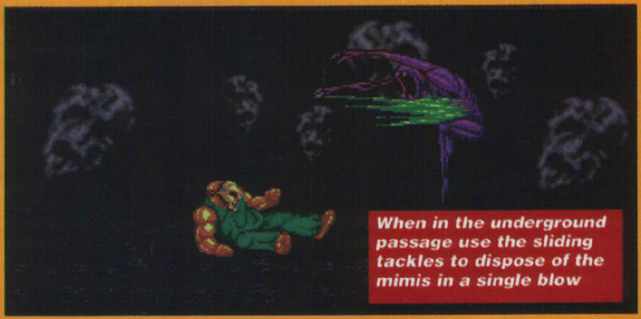

The slugs that fall from the ceiling are the only real problem on this first stage. Speedy low kicks are an easy way of disposing of them. Apart from this, you've just got the ghouls to kill and they will fall with a single punch

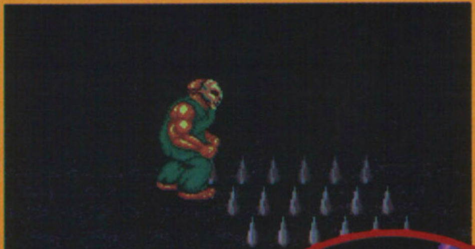
GUARDIAN I


Move in and give as many punches as possible. Jump back to the far left and then wait for the creature to run forward and back again. Move in close and punch. When it stops moving run to the left-hand side of the screen and wait for its belly to explode

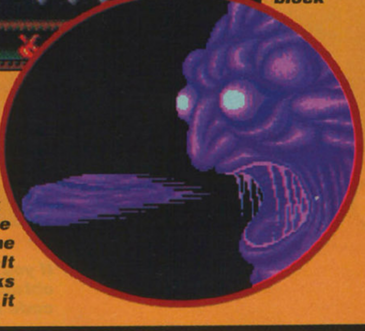
STAGE 2 – A SECRET ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE


On the elevator the screaming mimis will fall from above. Stand near the left-hand side of the platform and punch them as they fall. Those that come from the right can be avoided easily if you walk a few steps underneath them and hit out as they fall to your left


When in the underground passage use the sliding tackles to dispose of the mimis in a single blow

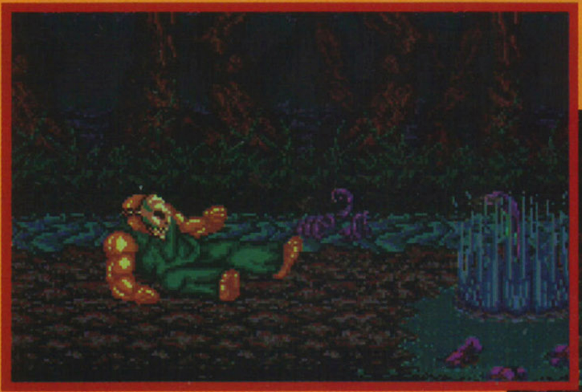

Wait for the first block of spikes to rise. Then as they begin to move back down into the ground jump once to the right and then leap immediately over the last block

GUARDIAN 2



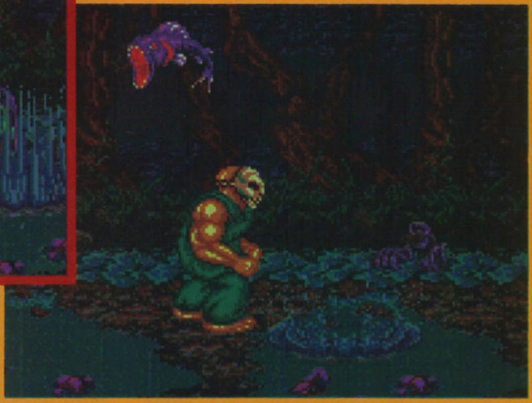
Punch the faces coming from the left, then the right, then right and then left – this pattern continues until you kill the boss. Kick the guardian in the eyes as it spits the phlegm at you. It should take five kicks to dispose of it

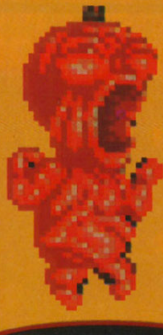
STAGE 3 – THE FOUL RIVER



You'll find out in the swamp that the sliding tackle is the best form of offence against the screaming mimis. These foul creatures attack from both sides but follow a set pattern

Jump over the water puddles and kick when the fish jump out. You should miss the piranhas anyway, but if you collide with one this manoeuvre will ensure that it doesn't attach itself to you



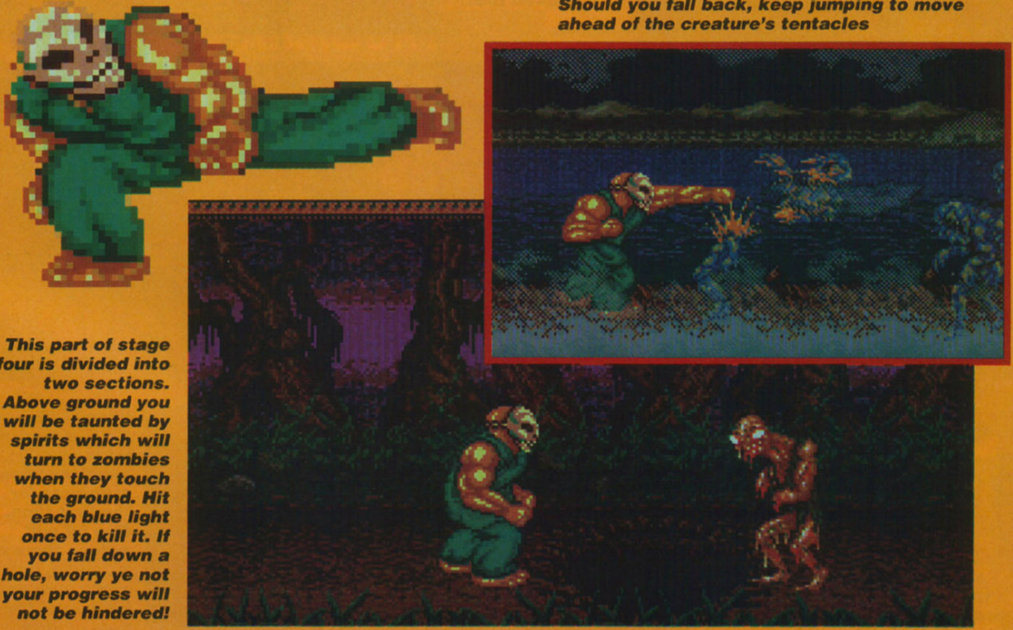


GUARDIAN 3

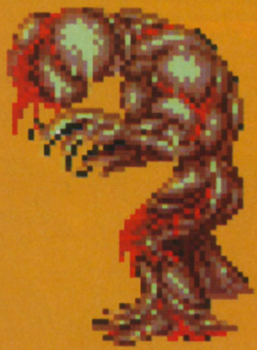
The skinned babies fall from the roof. Try to obtain the chain-saw by hitting it multiple times, and then apply a methodical attack pattern. As the babies fall, hack them once and avoid the green barf that they puke

STAGE 4 – PATH TO THE HOUSE

Out on the bridge you'll be chased by the river monster. Just keep moving and remember that it only takes one hit to destroy the ghouls. Should you fall back, keep jumping to move ahead of the creature's tentacles

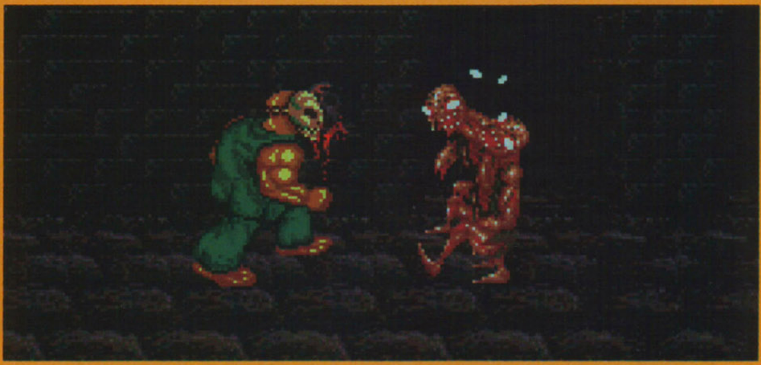


This part of stage four is divided into two sections. Above ground you will be taunted by spirits which will turn to zombies when they touch the ground. Hit each blue light once to kill it. If you fall down a hole, worry ye not your progress will not be hindered!

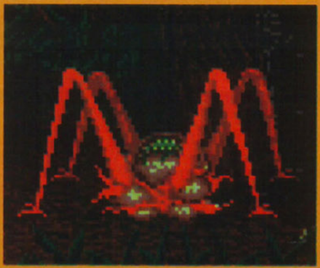


GUARDIAN 4

The creature will jump forwards and then backwards one step. When he does this you know he'll perform a sliding tackle on you – simply jump over it to avoid damage. Whenever it jumps use a single punch to knock it back a few steps. Perform this a number of times and it will transform into the spider...

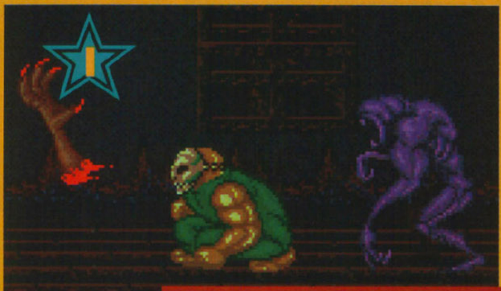


Falling through a hole leads to the underground passages. At various points you'll notice pairs of white dots in the archways – this shows you where the zombies will be coming from. Each creature will take two hits; one to knock it over, the other to kill it

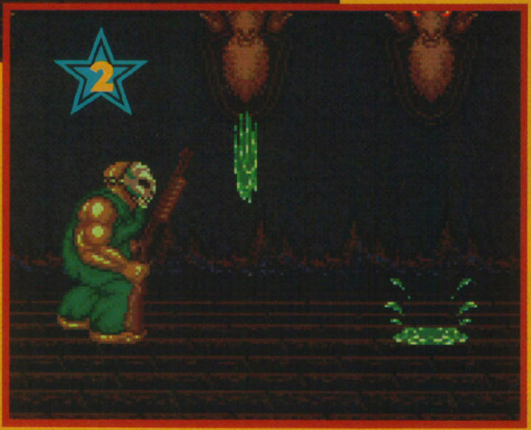


Once the spider has appeared from the creature's guts, keep using your low kick to destroy it. You'll only need to do this five or six times before it collapses in a heap

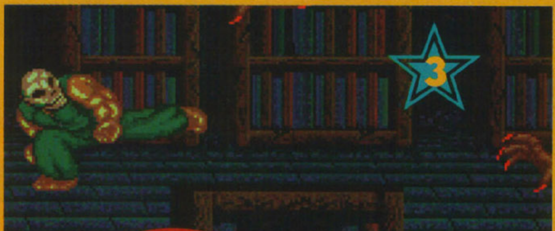
STAGE 5 – THE SPLATTERHOUSE



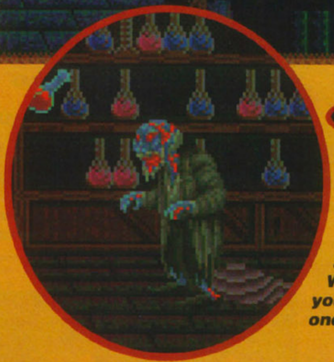
In the initial hallway you'll encounter mimis and amputated hands. Kicks and slide tackles dispose of the mimis, whilst single low kicks will annihilate the hands



The rams' heads that huey green goop aren't really a problem if you're careful. Remember the goop is still harmful until it has completely disappeared. Wait between each head until the path is clear. Use the gun to defend yourself from the mimis

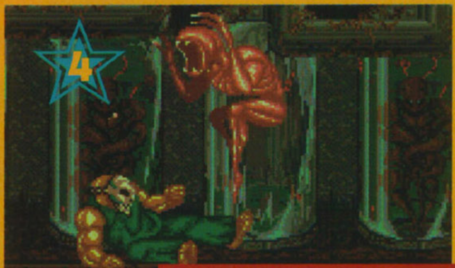


When you move into the library you will be attacked only by the hands. As before utilise your low kicks to kill them

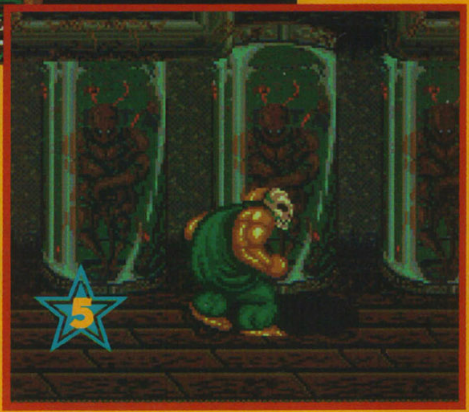


GUARDIAN 5

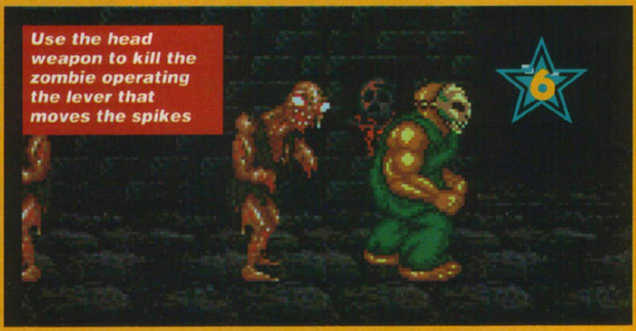
In the lab storeroom you'll have to deal with falling bottles of potion first. Jump over the flames that they produce and chase after the mad scientist. When you catch up with him you'll only need to hit him once. What a wimp eh?



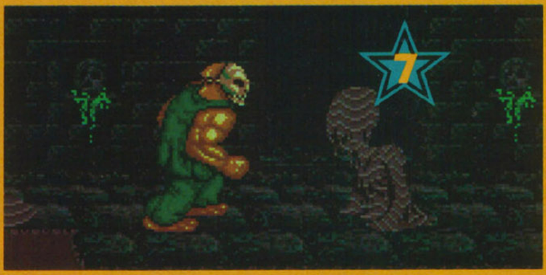
As you move past the glass tubes you'll be pounced upon periodically by genetically enhanced mimis. These dastardly creatures take three hits to destroy



Beneath the lab (if you fall through a hole) you'll find another passage filled with zombies. Avoid the spikes in the same manner explained in stage two to make sure you don't get pricked toes!



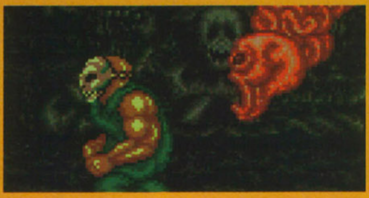
Use the head weapon to kill the zombie operating the lever that moves the spikes



Beyond the labs are the sewers where you'll meet the slime creatures for the first time. One hit will reduce them to a puddle, but make sure you jump over the pool of sludge

STAGE 6 – THE PORTAL OF DOOM

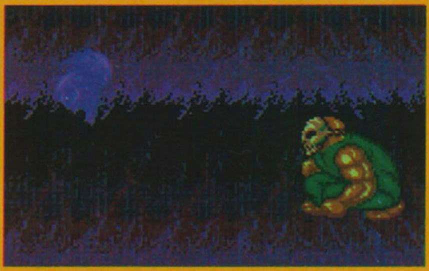
Walk up to the portal and watch as the spirits taunt you with a vision your beloved. As the hands drag the apparition back into the pit the guardian will appear...



GUARDIAN 6

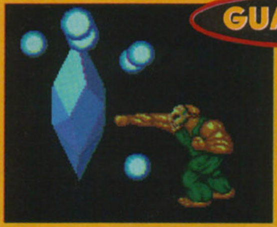
First a group of severed hands will fly from the portal – stay crouched on the left-hand side of the screen and kick most of them. Next you're up against a number of swirling heads that can be easily punched or low kicked. The final form that this boss appears in is a giant blob of severed body parts. Just move in close and keep punching to dispose of it!

STAGE 7 – DOWN TO THE ABYSS

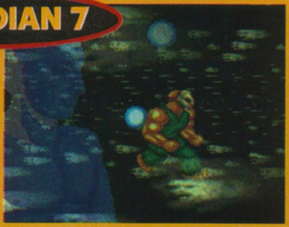


In the abyss you will be set upon by heads which first come from above and then below. These attacks always come from both sides so you'll have to be very quick. Stay in the middle of the screen and either punch or crouch kick

GUARDIAN 7

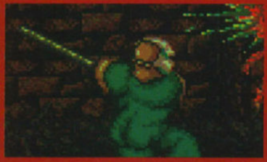


Punch the crystal. After each hit stand between the lightning shots which run across the screen



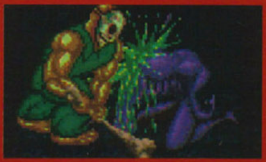
Stay as far to the right and jump kick the spirit spheres. Watch out for the lightning bolts that appear

THE ARMOURY



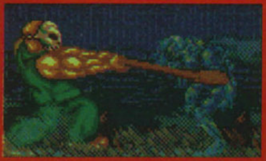
PIPING

Found at the end of stage one and splatters ghouls against the back wall



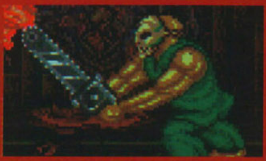
BONE

Found on stage two after the first spikes. Use it to crush the mimis' skulls



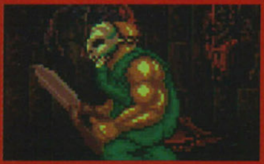
OAR

Found in the mist about halfway along stage four or on the bridge



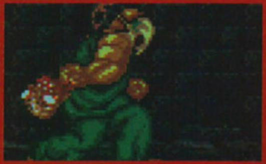
CHAIN-SAW

Found in the room with the babies. Hit it to the floor so you can pick it up



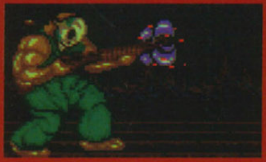
SHEARS

An alternative to the chain-saw. Wrestle the shears to the ground



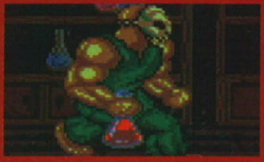
HEAD

Zombies leave their heads from stage four. They are effective throwing weapons



SHOTGUN

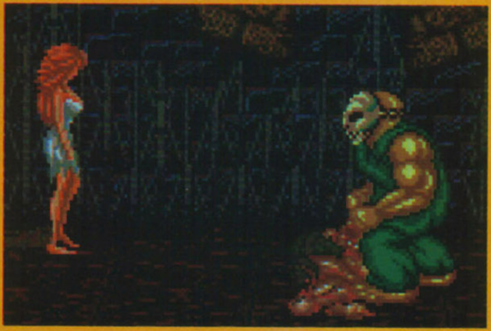
In the first hall of stage five are eight cartridges for use against the mimis



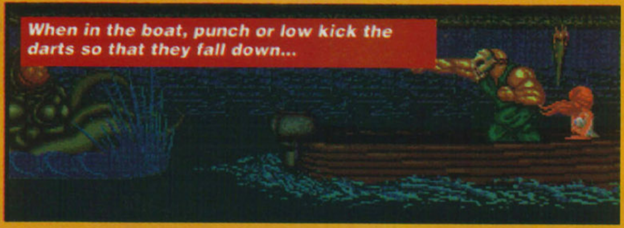
POTION

From the storeroom before the fifth guardian. Two more are in the section

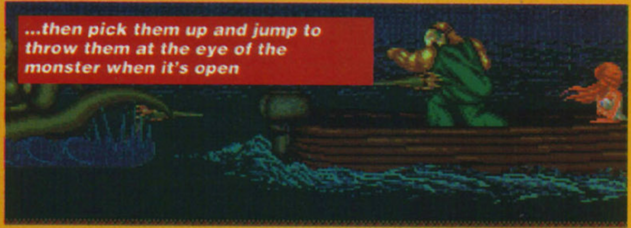
STAGE 8 – ESCAPE FROM THE SPLATTERHOUSE



Back on the elevator you must avoid the falling rubble whilst killing the zombies that move in from both sides. Stand in the centre of the platform and move as little as possible. Use kicks to kill the creatures

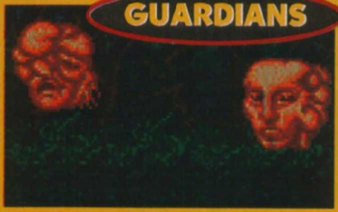


When in the boat, punch or low kick the darts so that they fall down...

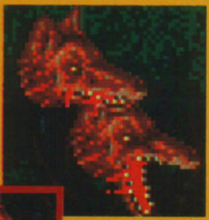


...then pick them up and jump to throw them at the eye of the monster when it's open

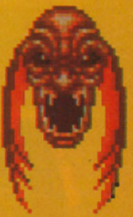
GUARDIANS



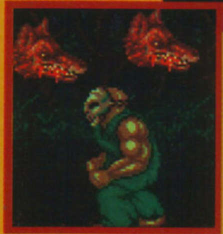
First of all the boss will throw numerous tortured faces at you from the right. Use rapid low kicks to dispose of two heads, then stand up to punch two more. Repeat this process on the left-hand side of the screen



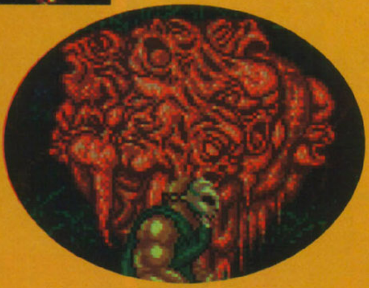
Next you'll get a bunch of wolf heads moving in from the side of the screen. Stay to the far left and use rapid low kicks and punches



As the creature turns into a bat try to hit it in the head. Stand left of centre facing inwards and keep punching



The wolf heads come back in a triangular formation that falls from the top of the screen. Stand to the left and use both low kicks and punches very quickly



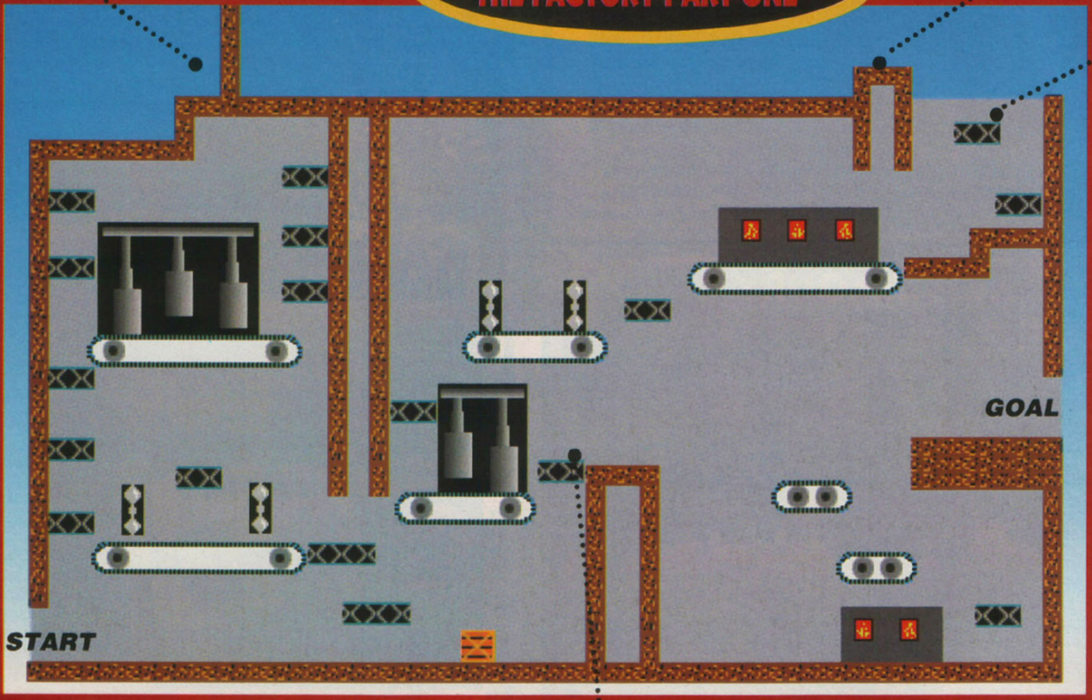
Keep punching and don't get trapped against the side. When it flashes white pass in front of it

The whirling mayhem of Taz-Mania always manages to provide a few laughs. There are problems on some of the later levels however, so just follow the maps and you shouldn't have too much difficulty.

DAVE

TAZ-MANIA

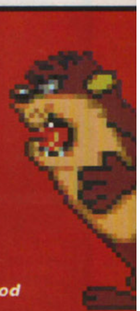
LEVEL 5
THE FACTORY PART ONE


1 Food
2 Food
3 Bomb
START
GOAL
4 Extra life

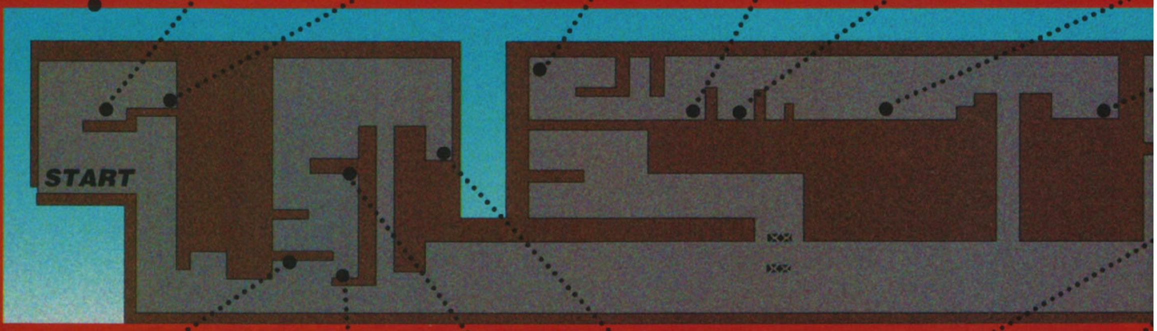
WANNA TIP?

This Replay code gives infinite lives: **FFD45B0003**.

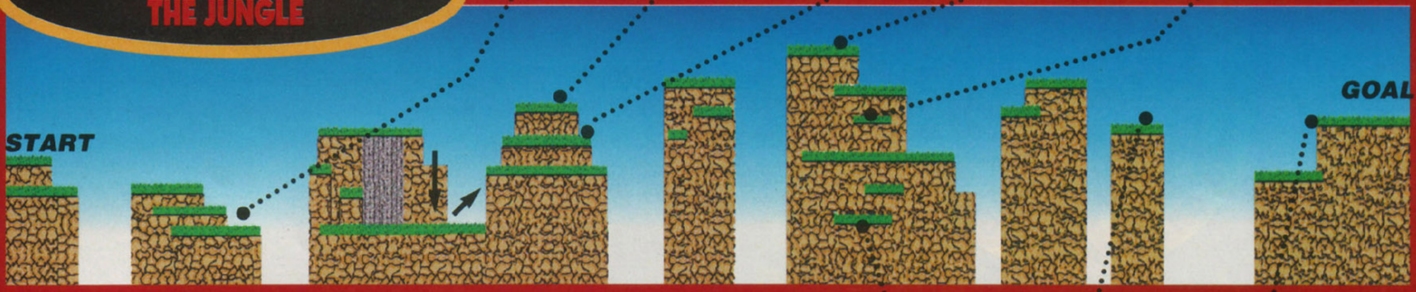
If you haven' got a Replay cart, then look for a continue picture near a milestone. Kill yourself, and keep grabbing the continues. This should leave you with a good suppl of continues.



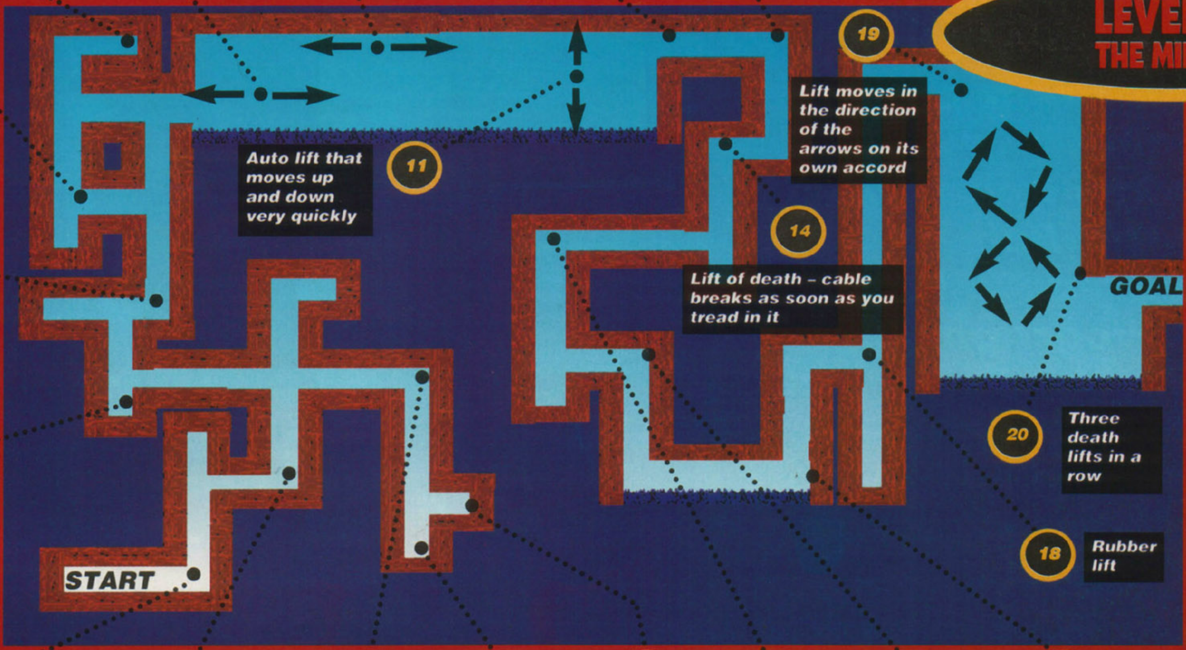
LEVEL 6
THE FACTORY PART TWO


1 Lazer gun
2 Bomb
3 Switch number one
8 Lazer gun
9 Bomb
10 Food
START
4 Lazer gun
5 Food
6 Lazer gun
7 Switch number two. There are two switches here so make sure it's the right-hand one
18 Lazer gun
16 Fo

LEVEL 8 THE JUNGLE

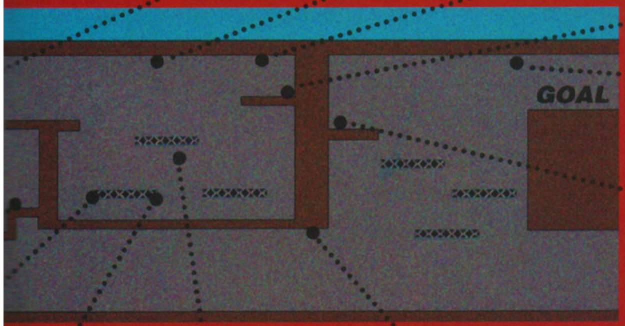

1 Food
2 Milestone – a halfway marker
3 Food
4 Bomb
5 Chilli peppers
START
GOAL
6 Milestone and extra life
7 Bomb
8 Bomb

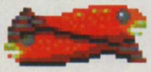
LEVEL 11 THE MINES


8 Milestone and water
9 Auto lift – moves from side to side
10 Same as nine but a tad higher
12 Milestone
13 Lift
19
Lift moves in the direction of the arrows on its own accord
7 Lift
Auto lift that moves up and down very quickly
11
14
6 Lift
Lift of death – cable breaks as soon as you tread in it
GOAL
20
Three death lifts in a row
5 Rubber band lift – jump in to make it go higher
18 Rubber lift
START
1 Normal lift
2 Auto lift – moves up and down on its own
3b Lift
3 Food
4 Bomb
15 Lift of death
16 Lift
17 Auto lift

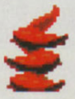
Once level 11 has been reached, you'll find yourself in the mines. This is where the gameplay alters a little. Instead of jumping from platform to platform, you'll find yourself driving a mining trolley. Quick reflexes will safely see you through this particular stage.

Simply follow these directions to reach the end safely; C, C, C, Right, Right, C, C, C, C, C, C, Right, C, Left, Left, Right, C then let go quickly, C, C, C, C, C, C, Right.

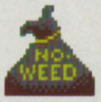

11 Bomb
12 Food and extra life
13 Lazer gun
14 Lazer gun
15 Switch number three
21 Lazer gun
GOAL
20 Food
17 Bomb
18 Lazer gun
19 Lazer gun



FISH: This makes a perfect little seafood snack for our munching hero

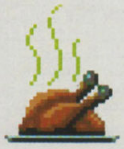


CHILLI PEPPER: Guaranteed to warm things up a little. Once consumed, Taz is able to belch fire onto his enemies



BAG OF NO-WEED: Don't eat! You may however, throw it at other critters

Stopping off for a little drink. Tazzie has to replenish his bodily fluids



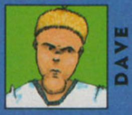
CHICKEN: Yum! Yum! Let's have some!

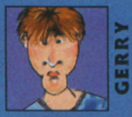
Boom! Taz tries a rare delicacy called dynamite. Aspirins anyone?

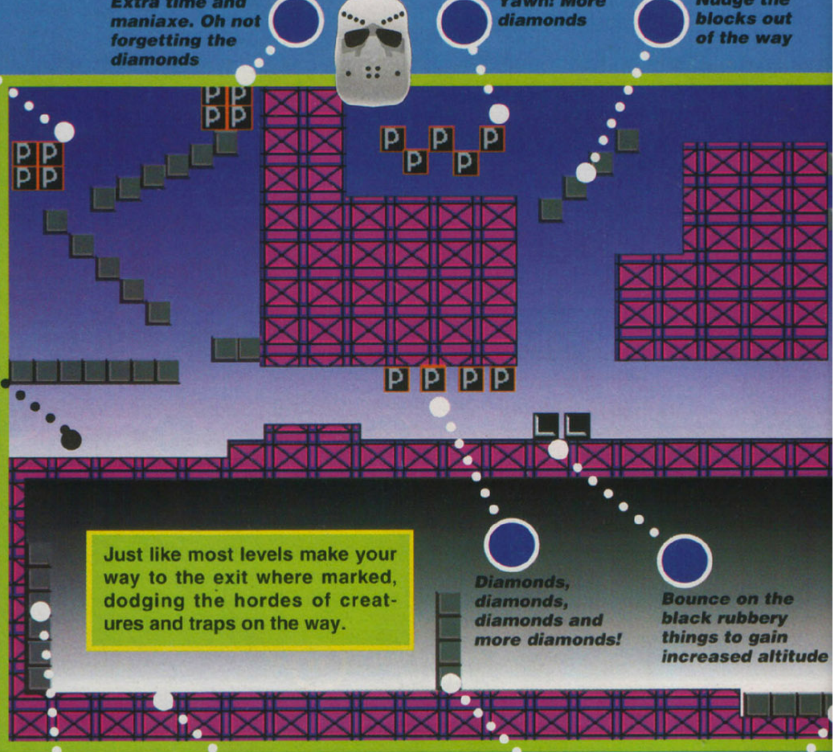
INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

KID CHAMELEON

Poor John, after the gruelling task of mapping the earlier levels of this great platform game he was taken away to an institution for retired cartographers. Thankfully for you the task was handed to the most experienced mapper in the world, me! Oh and Gerry!







Diamonds to be collected

Start here

Extra time and maniaxe. Oh not forgetting the diamonds

Yawn! More diamonds

Nudge the blocks out of the way

Just like most levels make your way to the exit where marked, dodging the hordes of creatures and traps on the way.

Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds and more diamonds!

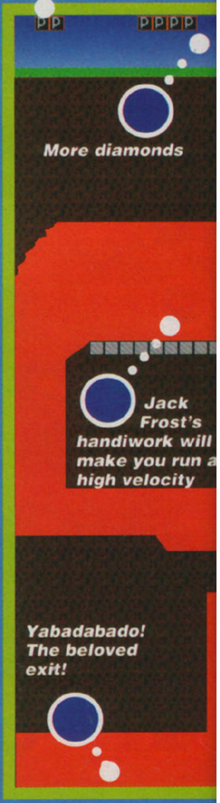
Bounce on the black rubbery things to gain increased altitude

Careful of the wall now!

Yeah! The fabulous flag to take you further on

A good run-up is needed to jump over this spiky wall

Spiky blocks for the unwary



The starting point of the woods

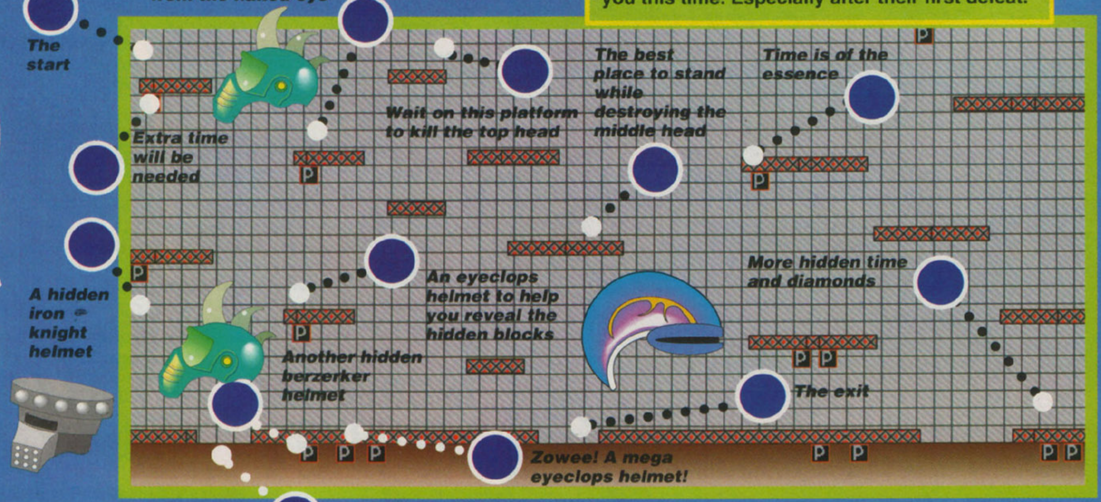
More diamonds

Jack Frost's handiwork will make you run a high velocity

Yabadabado! The beloved exit!

BAGEL BROTHERS

The spinning heads return to battle with our little hallucinator. However they're all out to get you this time. Especially after their first defeat.



The start

A berzerker helmet hidden from the naked eye

Wait on this platform to kill the top head

The best place to stand while destroying the middle head

Time is of the essence

Extra time will be needed

A hidden iron knight helmet

An eyeclops helmet to help you reveal the hidden blocks

Another hidden berzerker helmet

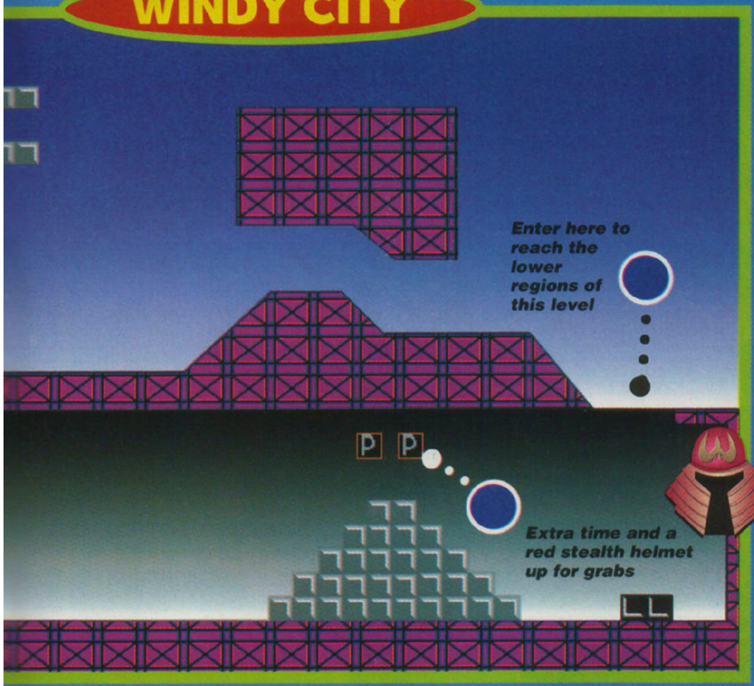
More hidden time and diamonds

The exit

Zowee! A mega eyeclops helmet!

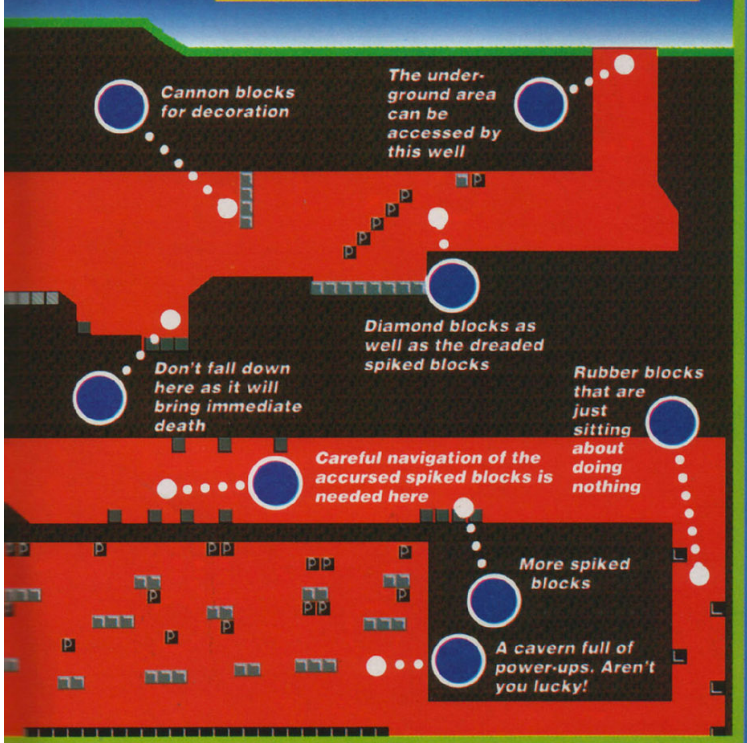
Wait until the head leaves here and attack with full ferocity

WINDY CITY


Enter here to reach the lower regions of this level
Extra time and a red stealth helmet up for grabs

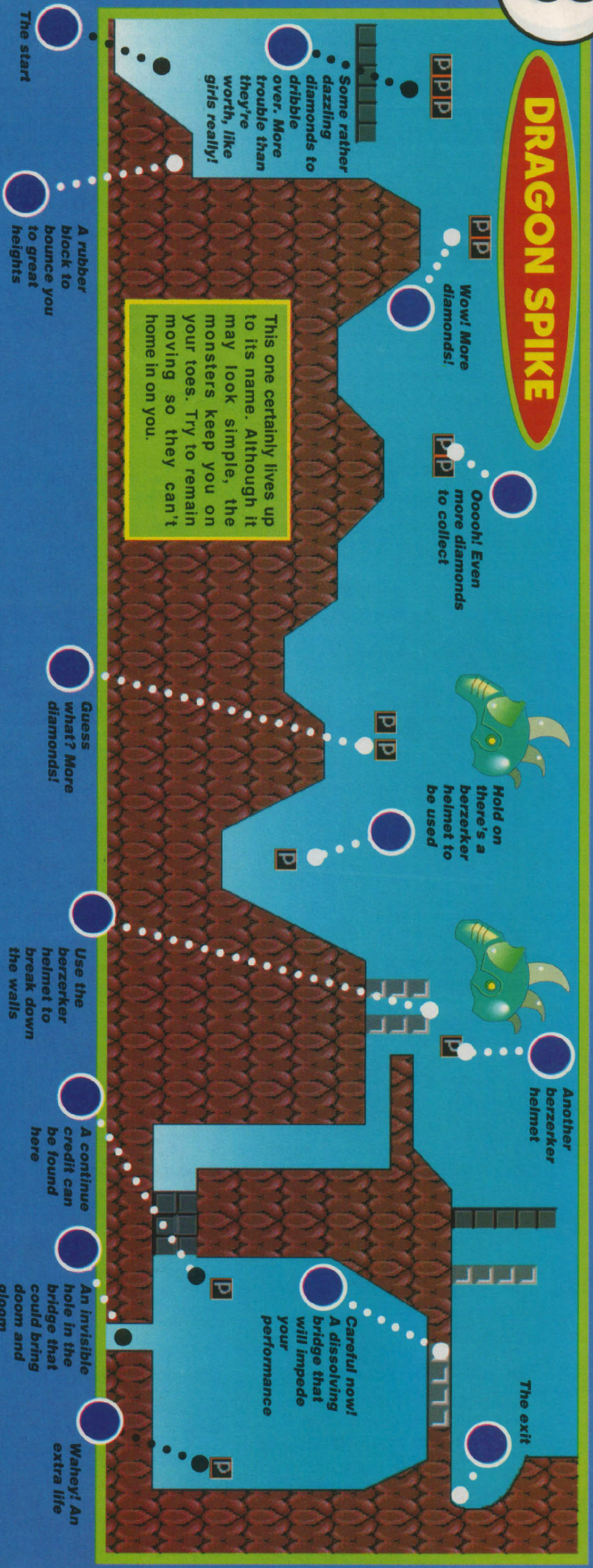
THE WHISPERING WOODS

If only this glade was as quiet as its name suggests. The sweet sound of singing birds and chattering daisies comes to an end however, as you explore the never-ending well.


Cannon blocks for decoration
The underground area can be accessed by this well
Diamond blocks as well as the dreaded spiked blocks
Don't fall down here as it will bring immediate death
Rubber blocks that are just sitting about doing nothing
Careful navigation of the accursed spiked blocks is needed here
More spiked blocks
A cavern full of power-ups. Aren't you lucky!

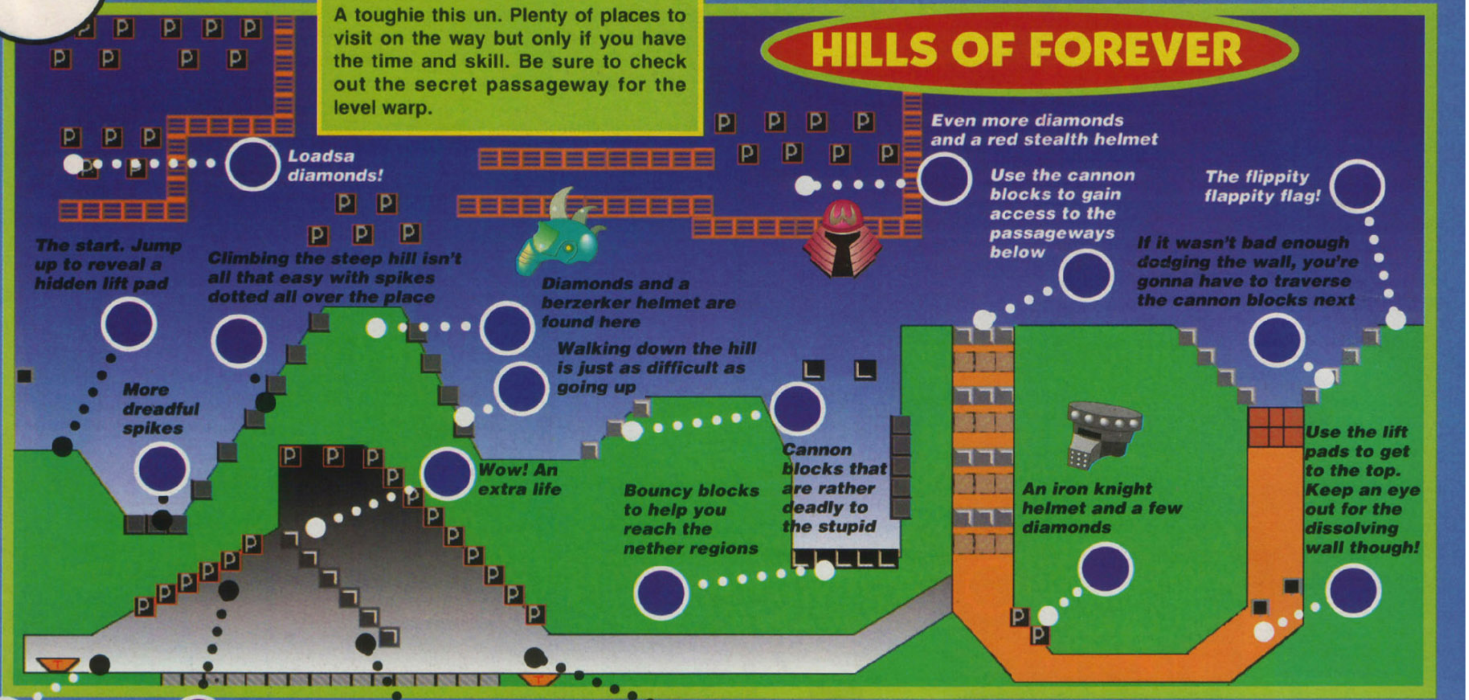
DRAGON SPIKE

This one certainly lives up to its name. Although it may look simple, the monsters keep you on your toes. Try to remain moving so they can't home in on you.


The start
Some rather dazzling diamonds to dribble over. More trouble than they're worth, like girls really!
A rubber block to bounce you to great heights
Wow! More diamonds!
Ooooh! Even more diamonds to collect
Guess what? More diamonds!
Hold on there's a berzerker helmet to be used
Use the berzerker helmet to break down the walls
Another berzerker helmet
A continue credit can be found here
An invisible hole in the bridge that could bring doom and gloom
Careful now! A dissolving bridge that will impede your performance
Wahey! An extra life
The exit

HILLS OF FOREVER

A toughie this un. Plenty of places to visit on the way but only if you have the time and skill. Be sure to check out the secret passageway for the level warp.



Loadsa diamonds!

Even more diamonds and a red stealth helmet

Use the cannon blocks to gain access to the passageways below

The flippity flappity flag!

The start. Jump up to reveal a hidden lift pad

Climbing the steep hill isn't all that easy with spikes dotted all over the place

Diamonds and a berzerker helmet are found here

If it wasn't bad enough dodging the wall, you're gonna have to traverse the cannon blocks next

Walking down the hill is just as difficult as going up

More dreadful spikes

Wow! An extra life

Cannon blocks that are rather deadly to the stupid

Bouncy blocks to help you reach the nether regions

An iron knight helmet and a few diamonds

Use the lift pads to get to the top. Keep an eye out for the dissolving wall though!

The teleport that will take you inside the pyramid

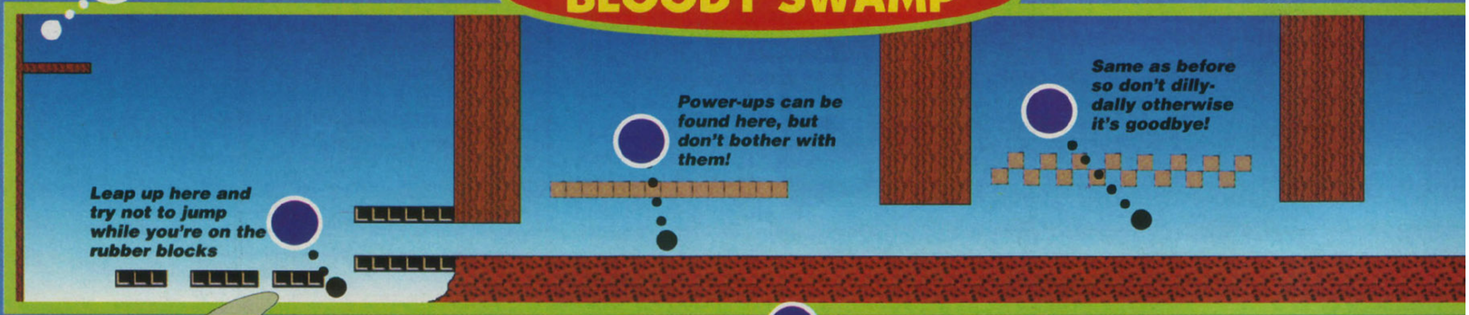
More diamonds than you could ever imagine

Slippery ice and attacking creatures make this part very tricky indeed

This teleport will take you a few levels further on

BLOODY SWAMP

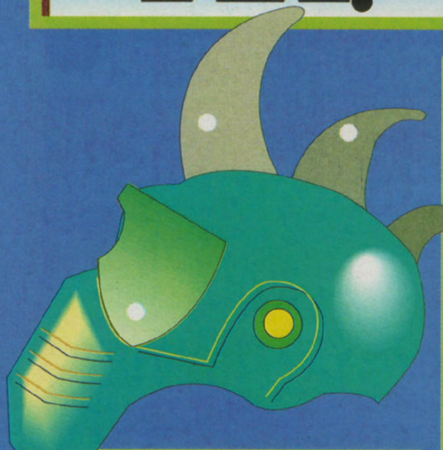
The start. Run right while in speed mode and don't jump



Power-ups can be found here, but don't bother with them!

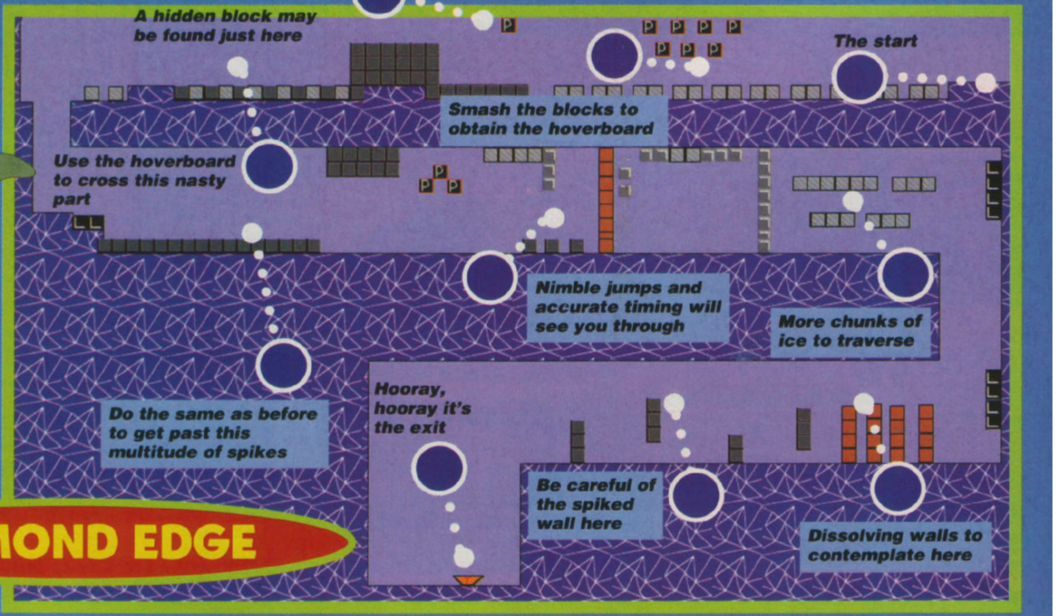
Same as before so don't dilly-dally otherwise it's goodbye!

Leap up here and try not to jump while you're on the rubber blocks



One of the chilly sections of the game. It wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for the fact you keep sliding everywhere.

DIAMOND EDGE



A hidden block may be found just here

The start

Smash the blocks to obtain the hoverboard

Use the hoverboard to cross this nasty part

Nimble jumps and accurate timing will see you through

More chunks of ice to traverse

Hooray, hooray it's the exit

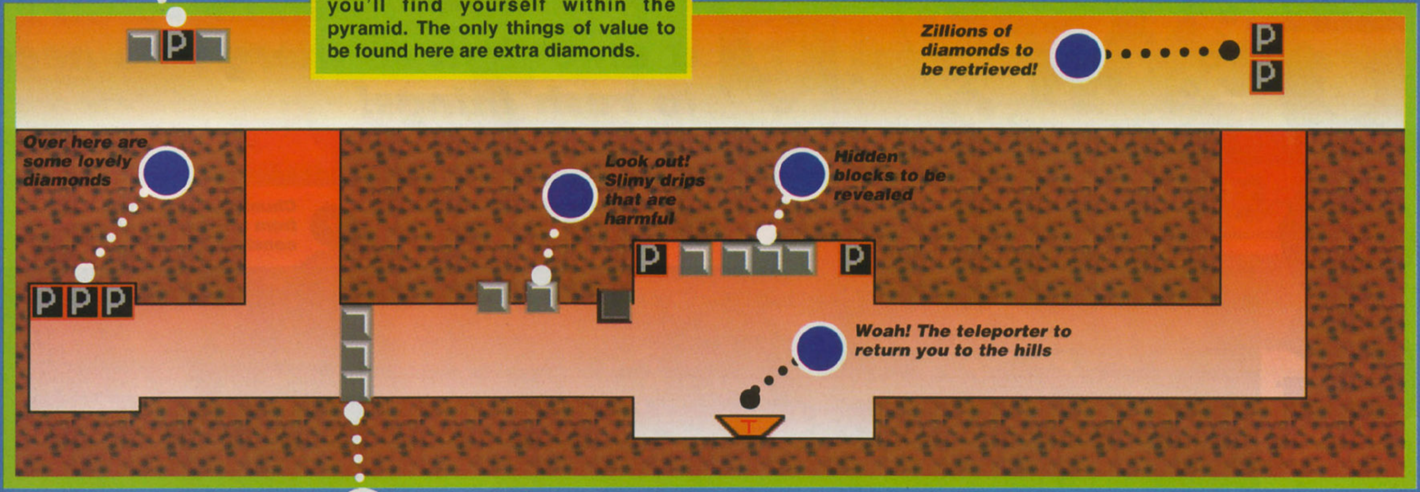
Do the same as before to get past this multitude of spikes

Be careful of the spiked wall here

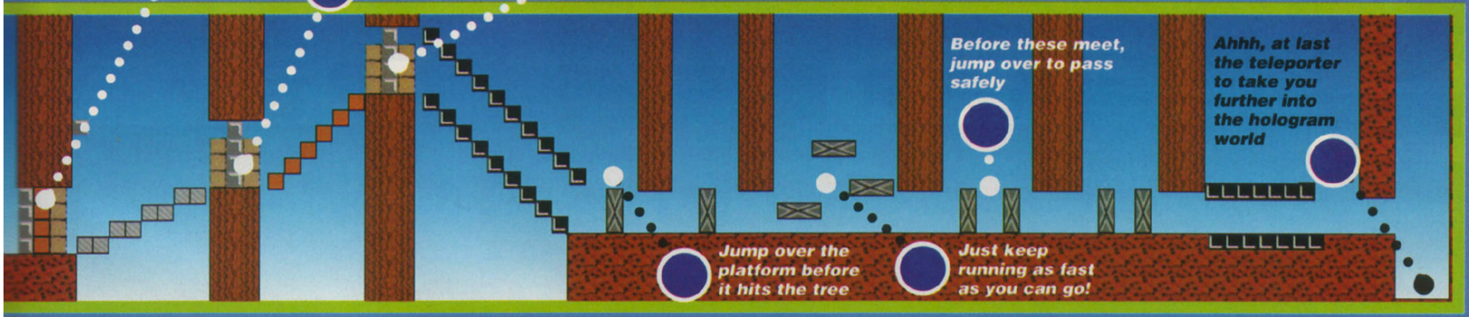
Dissolving walls to contemplate here

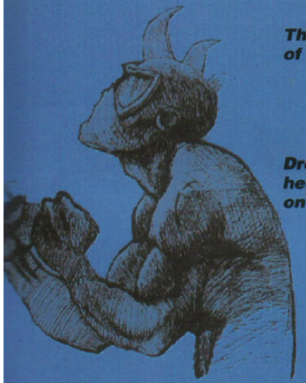
INSIDE THE PYRAMID

Teleporting from the Hills of Forever you'll find yourself within the pyramid. The only things of value to be found here are extra diamonds.


Start here. There's a diamond above your head
Zillions of diamonds to be retrieved!
Over here are some lovely diamonds
Look out! Slimy drips that are harmful
Hidden blocks to be revealed
Woah! The teleporter to return you to the hills
Break down the cannon block wall from the left-hand side

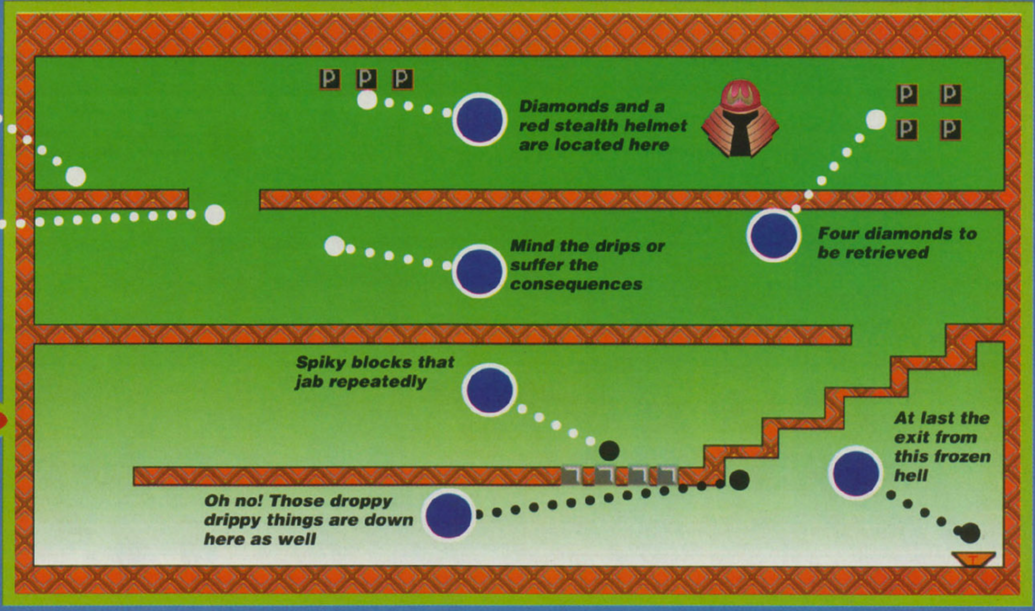
Just like the Hills of the Warrior this level is a race against a hideous machine. Don't bother to pick up power-ups on the way, you don't have the time, believe me!


Don't hit the cannon blocks if the dissolving wall is in the way
Jump up here and crawl through the gap
The same as before just crawl through to pass
Before these meet, jump over to pass safely
Ahhh, at last the teleporter to take you further into the hologram world
Jump over the platform before it hits the tree
Just keep running as fast as you can go!



ELSEWHERE

Arriving from another teleportation pad at Diamond Edge you'll find yourself in a rather basic level. Simply toddle down to the exit for more fun and adventure.


The beginning of the level
Diamonds and a red stealth helmet are located here
Drop down here to carry on
Mind the drips or suffer the consequences
Four diamonds to be retrieved
Spiky blocks that jab repeatedly
At last the exit from this frozen hell
Oh no! Those droppy drippy things are down here as well

CHUCK ROCK

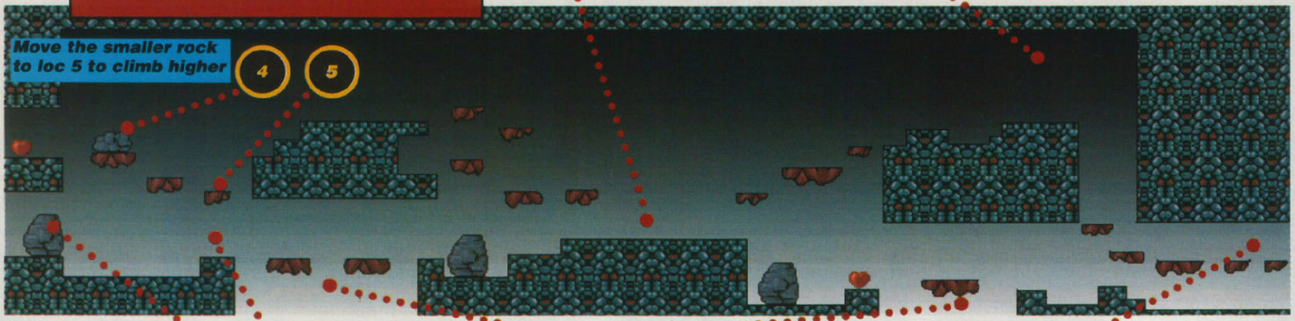
If your hairy primate is having trouble then follow the maps. You don't have to explore all of them, just go through the levels via the safest routes. Also there isn't a time-limit so there's no need to rush things!

DAVE

STAGE 2-1

① A lift here gives the option to explore the higher regions of the caverns

⑦ Chunks of rock erupt from the ceiling causing considerable damage



Move the smaller rock to loc 5 to climb higher ④ ⑤

Move this rock to loc 3 to gain access to the heart ② ③

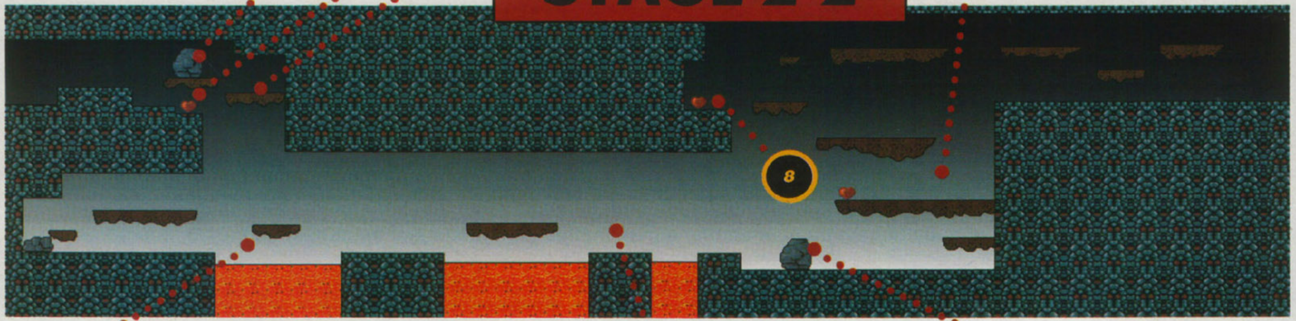
⑥ Do your best to stay clear of the lava in these pits

⑧ At last the end of this level

Nudge this rock to loc 3 to obtain special prizes at loc 4 ② ③ ③

STAGE 2-2

① Another lift to raise you higher



⑧

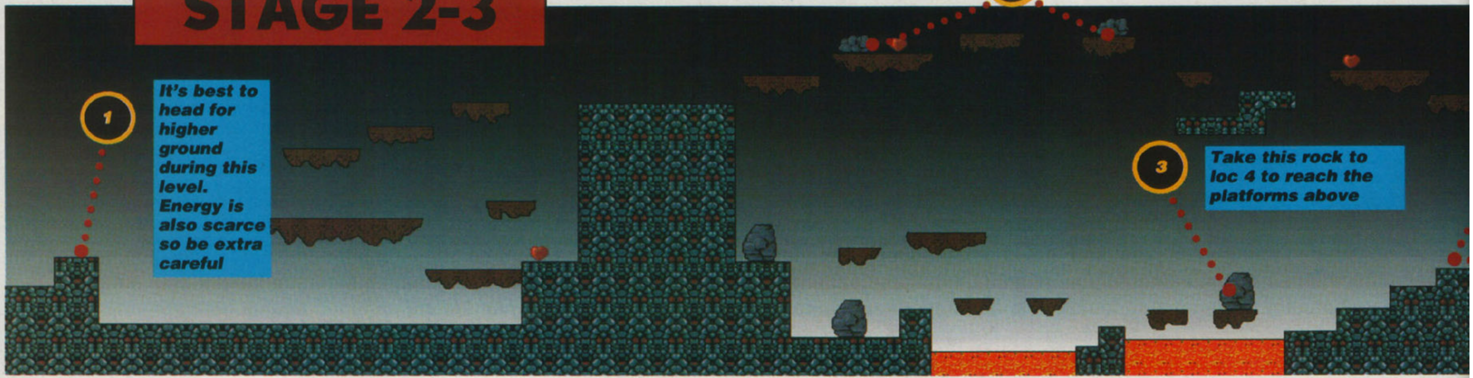
⑤ Tiny fire elementals leap out and attempt to scorch you

⑥ Poisonous spiders weave their webs here

⑦ Take this rock up the lift with you to retrieve the heart at loc 8

Use these rocks to throw at your enemies ②

STAGE 2-3



① It's best to head for higher ground during this level. Energy is also scarce so be extra careful

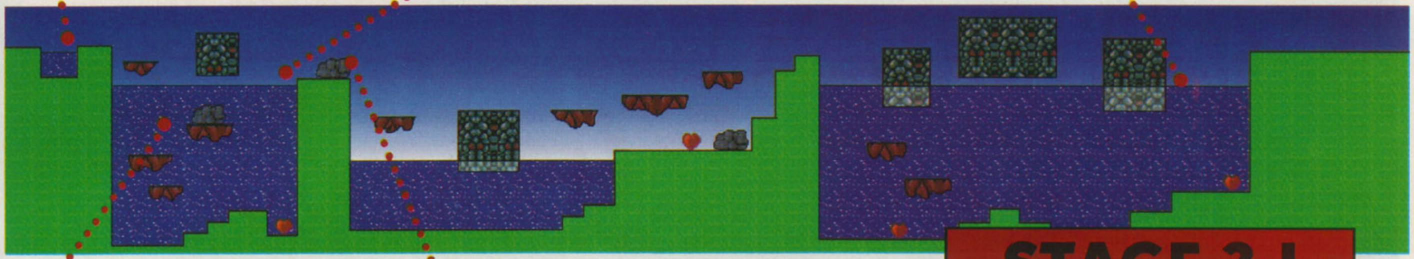
③ Take this rock to loc 4 to reach the platforms above

STAGE 3-1

① When swimming underwater keep your eye on the air-o-meter. You wouldn't want to drown now would you?

② A little like the crocodiles earlier, you can use this frog to jump higher. This allows you to explore places which are difficult to access

③ Jump on the blue whale to catch a ride to the other side



④ The water will be infested with all sorts of aquatic creatures. Try to avoid or destroy them if possible

⑤ If you wish to walk along the bottom of the water then take this rock with you

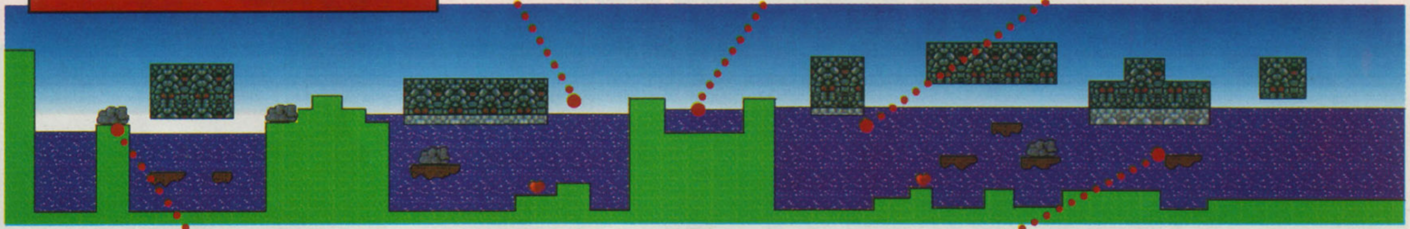
HANDY HINT: While travelling through water stay still and let your character float to the top. He'll settle down and you're free to swim across the top of the water without much worry of possible encounters.

STAGE 3-2

① Make full use of the whale waiting here

② The frog is always ready to jump taking you to greater heights

③ Beware of the venomous jellyfish that skim across the top of the water

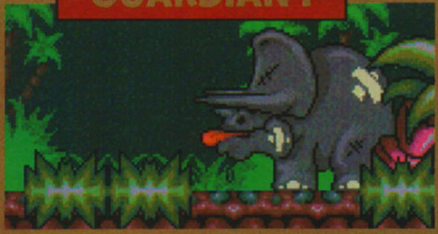


⑤ Chuck the rocks into the water to reduce the amount of baddies

④ You're gonna need a lungful of air to get through this passageway safely

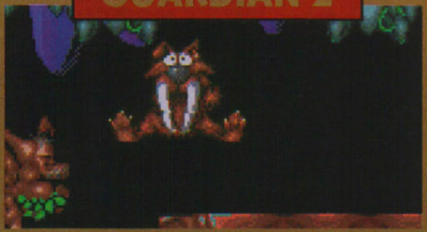
YES, MR GUARDIAN, SIR!

GUARDIAN 1



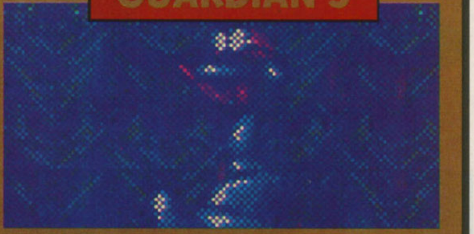
TRICERATOPS
As it's running to the right jump down and pick up the rock. Throw the rock onto its head from the highest platform. Keep repeating.

GUARDIAN 2



SABRE-TOOTHED TIGER
Easy to defeat. Wait until it runs towards you, then jump into the air and deliver a kick into its ugly face. Wounded, it'll retreat for a short time before attacking again.

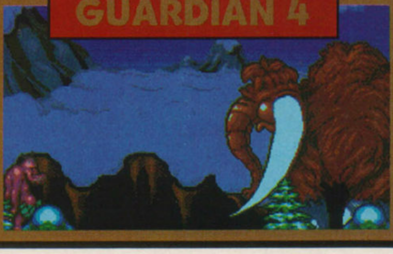
GUARDIAN 3



WALRUS
The hardest guardian to overcome. Swim over to its midriff area, near to the flippers. Then start kicking at it as fast as you can. If you need some air, rush up to the surface.

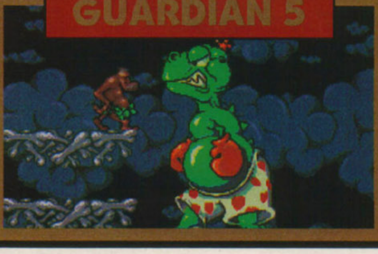
④
Location 4

GUARDIAN 4



MAMMOTH
It's easy to destroy. Stand in the middle and when it jumps at you start wobbling your belly at its trunk. If you make contact you'll see its eyes widen. After a few attacks it'll drop off screen.

GUARDIAN 5

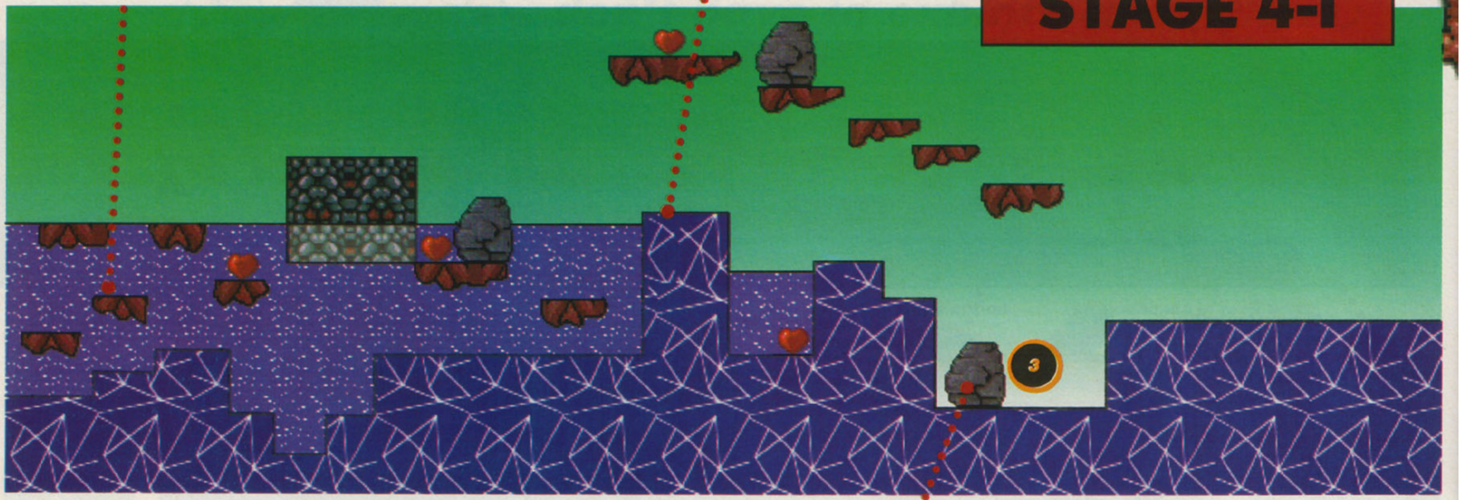


GARY GRITTER
It's a hideous opponent! Wait on the top platform and as it nears jump into the air to make it snap at you. Then run, jump and kick Gary on the nose. Repeat this process about 50 times.

STAGE 4-1

4 *Fish are engulfed in ice-cubes, but they're still quite deadly*

1 *A friendly woolly mammoth will toss you into the air*



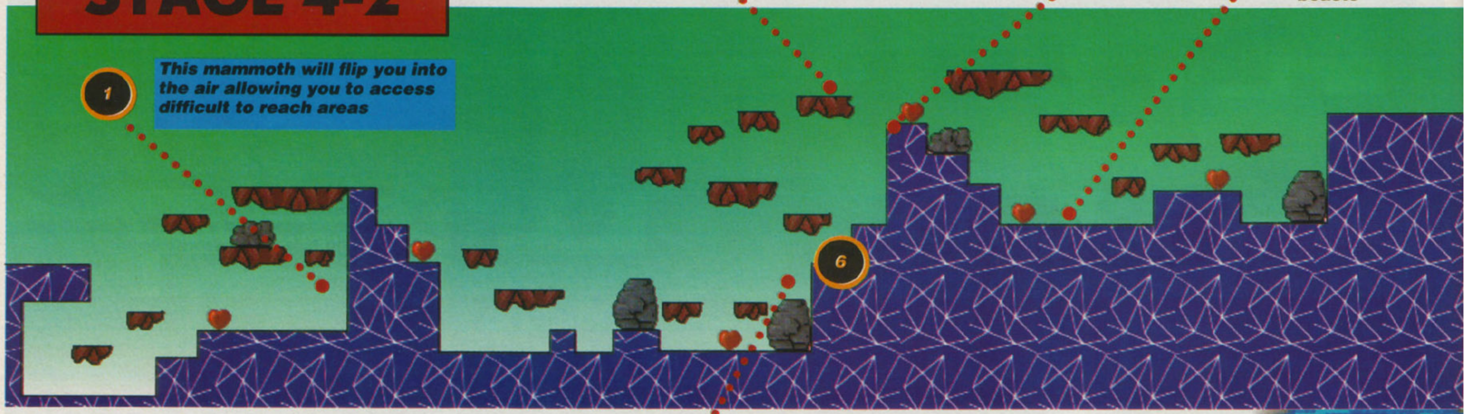
2 *Place this rock at loc 3 to advance further*

STAGE 4-2

2 *A mammoth to allow access to higher areas*

3 *Another mammoth...*

4 *...and another of the woolley beasts*



1 *This mammoth will flip you into the air allowing you to access difficult to reach areas*

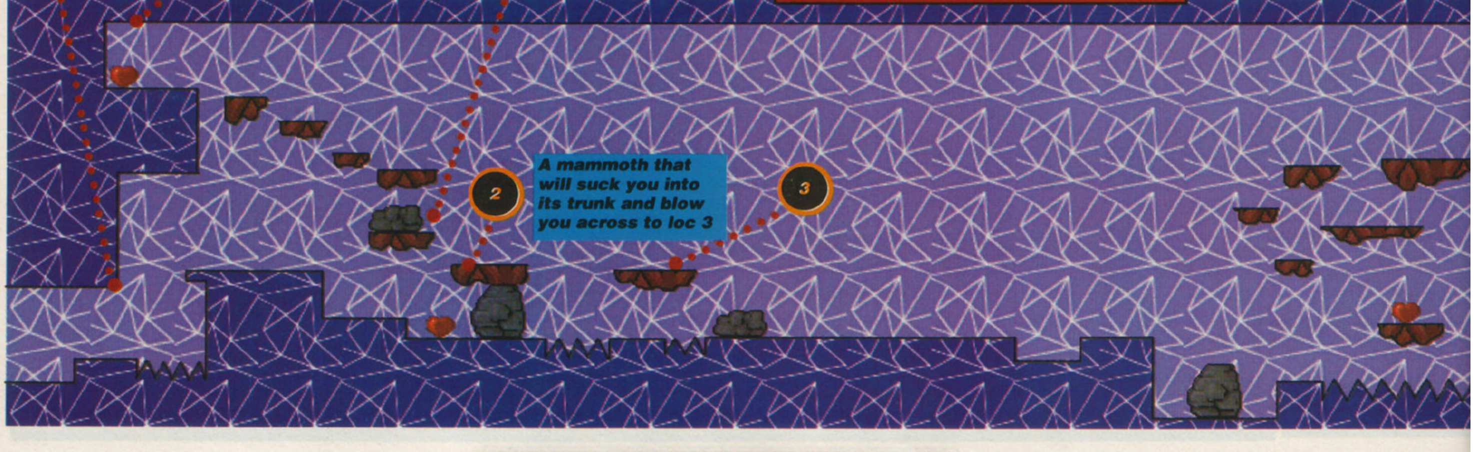
5 *Stand on this rock and time it so when you jump into the air you're able to kill the geek who keeps on throwing those snowballs from loc 6*

4 *Look out for those falling icicles*

6 *Another batch of falling icicles*

1 *Yawn! Another mammoth to be used*

STAGE 4-3

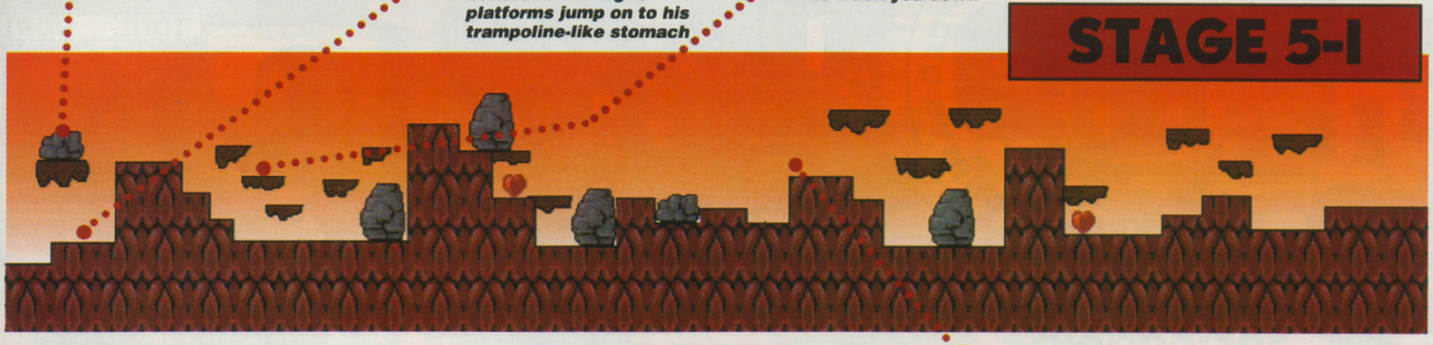


2 *A mammoth that will suck you into its trunk and blow you across to loc 3*

③ *Use the smaller rock to kill the bony things*

① *A strange fat creature resides here. So to gain access to the higher platforms jump on to his trampoline-like stomach*

④ *Certain monsters when killed will release a devil to track you down*



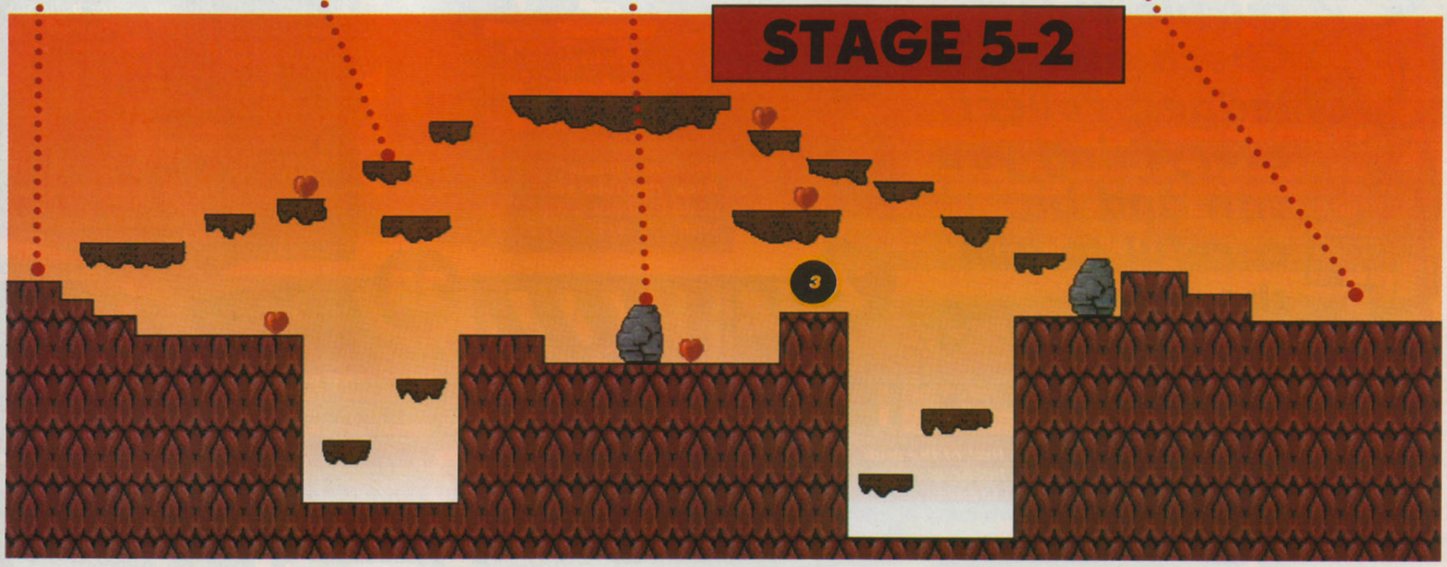
② *Another bouncy castle to aid you on your way*

① *Aim for the higher pathway to claim more rejuvenating hearts*

④ *Flying skeletons will cause much distress to our little prehistoric hero*

② *If you've decided to take the harder route, then move the rock to loc 3 to receive extra power*

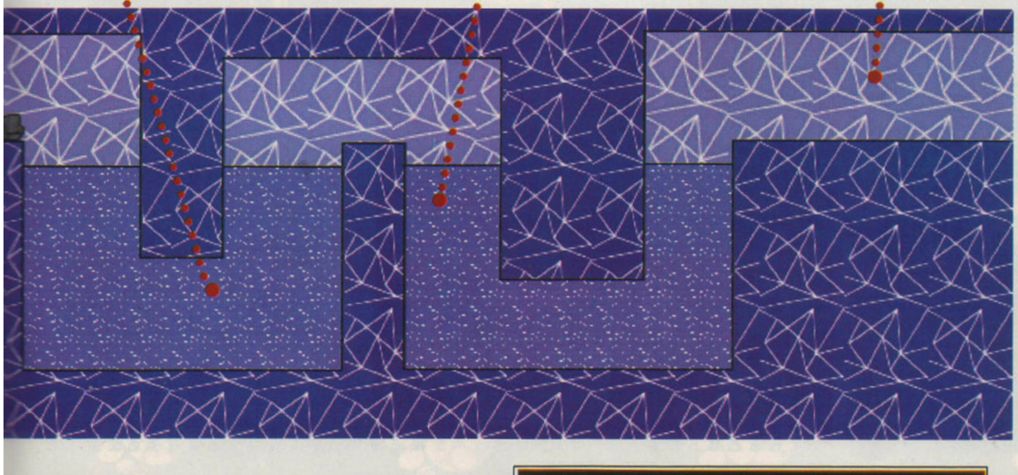
⑤ *Entering the dinosaur's mouth for the last time you encounter Gary Gritter. Can you save your girl?*



⑤ *Snapping fish will try to put an end to your quest*

⑥ *More fish that are dying for a nibble of your ankles*

⑦ *Ahh, at last the chance to revive before proceeding to the Graveyard level – Stage 5.1*

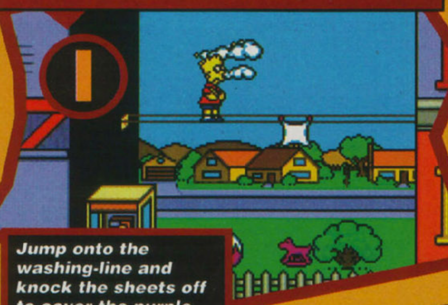


THE SIMPSONS

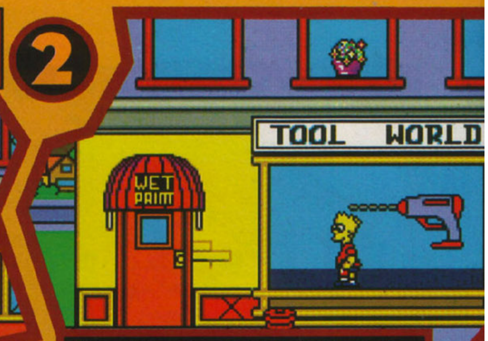
BART Vs THE SPACE MUTANTS

Wander though Springfield covering, destroying or hiding all the purple objects. Check out ledges, collect everything you can and be careful to aim the rockets properly.

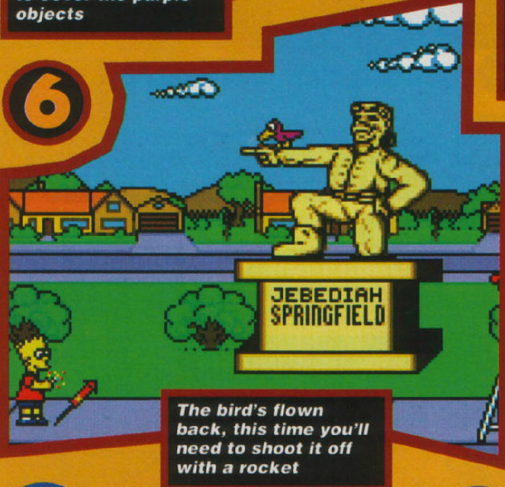
LEVEL 1



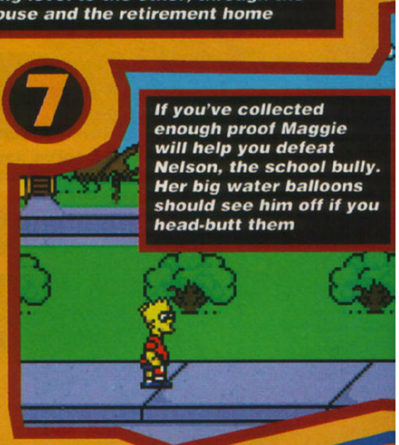
Jump onto the washing-line and knock the sheets off to cover the purple objects



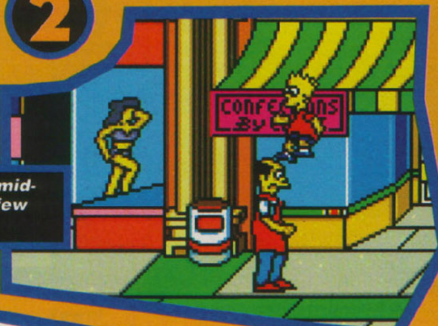
Buy a wrench and a key in the tool shop and use the wrench to turn on the fire hydrant which will then wash the wet paint off the awning. The key will allow warp from one end of this long level to the other, through the house and the retirement home



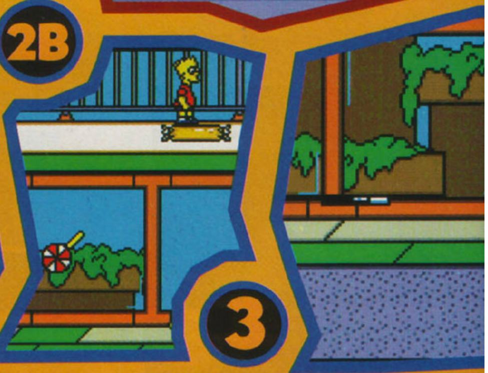
The bird's flown back, this time you'll need to shoot it off with a rocket

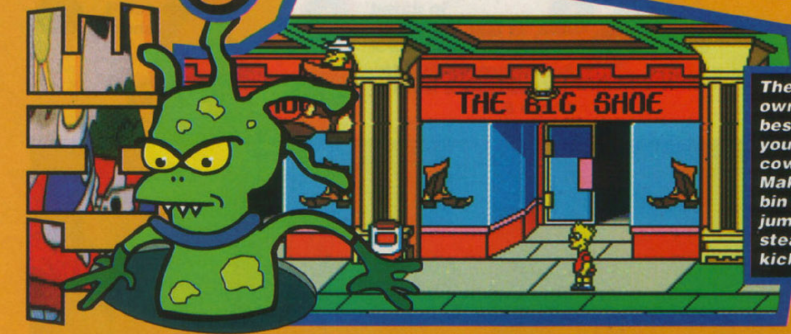


If you've collected enough proof Maggie will help you defeat Nelson, the school bully. Her big water balloons should see him off if you head-butt them

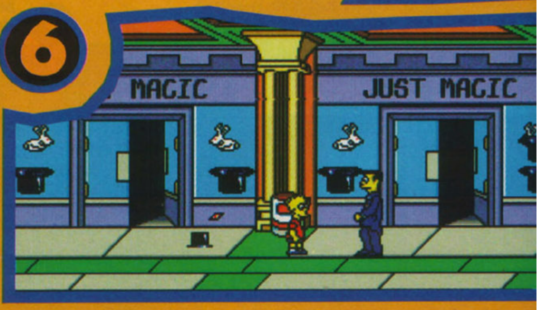


The sweet shop owner is the first of the mid-level guardians, just jump on his head a few times and he'll soon be out of the way





The shoe store owner tries his best to squash you with this huge cowboy boot. Make use of the bin so you can jump on his head, steal his hat and kick him out



SPLATTERHOUSE II

We have given you the players' guide, and to be really helpful here are all of the level codes to help you on your way through.

Level 2:
EDK NAI ZOL LDL
Level 3:
IDO GEM IAL LDL
Level 4:
ADE XOE ZOL OME
Level 5:
EFH VEI RAG ORD
Level 6:
ADE NAI WRA LKA
Level 7:
EFH XOE IAL LDL
Level 8:
EDK VEI IAL LDL

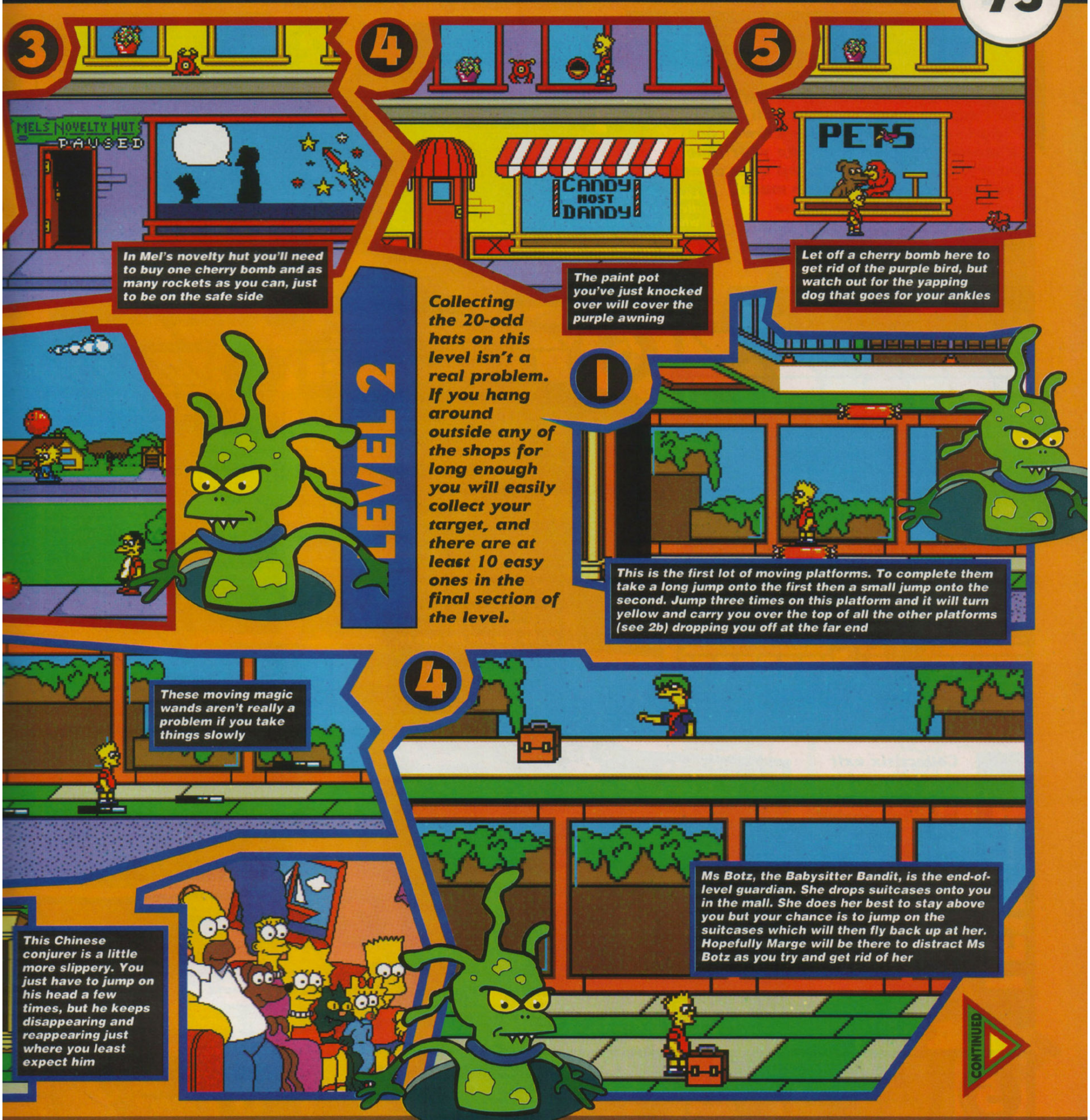
SCORE
LIFE
ITEM

FINAL BLOW

Any of you sad and deranged nutjobs who actually went out and bought this ludicrously crappy game will doubtless be in desperate need of a cheat to aid your progress. When your game is over press Up and Start for another credit.

PAM'S TIP OF THE MONTH

Pam, in her infinite wisdom has discovered a most useful tip for those of you who may have left your paddling pool out in the garden for too long. Yep, we're talking algae here people. It's a real trauma innit? All you have to do is remember to bring it in earlier, before the rainy season starts and you'll be all right. However, should you experience scummy poolitis though, wash with Persil Micro and a good stiff brush. Well not too stiff, you don't want any punctures do you?



In Mel's novelty hut you'll need to buy one cherry bomb and as many rockets as you can, just to be on the safe side

The paint pot you've just knocked over will cover the purple awning

Let off a cherry bomb here to get rid of the purple bird, but watch out for the yapping dog that goes for your ankles

LEVEL 2

Collecting the 20-odd hats on this level isn't a real problem. If you hang around outside any of the shops for long enough you will easily collect your target, and there are at least 10 easy ones in the final section of the level.

This is the first lot of moving platforms. To complete them take a long jump onto the first then a small jump onto the second. Jump three times on this platform and it will turn yellow and carry you over the top of all the other platforms (see 2b) dropping you off at the far end

These moving magic wands aren't really a problem if you take things slowly

This Chinese conjurer is a little more slippery. You just have to jump on his head a few times, but he keeps disappearing and reappearing just where you least expect him

Ms Botz, the Babysitter Bandit, is the end-of-level guardian. She drops suitcases onto you in the mall. She does her best to stay above you but your chance is to jump on the suitcases which will then fly back up at her. Hopefully Marge will be there to distract Ms Botz as you try and get rid of her

CONTINUED

TIGER HELI

At the start, press button B to select the hard level and then press Start twice. When you reach the 'Press Start' prompt keep pressing A until the credits start to increase. You'll be able to keep doing this until the credits reach 99.

BLOCKED BOG

Should you have any unwanted blockages in your lavatory, but a plunger is not at hand, why not try an old fashioned-style mop?

Yep, plunge ye olde floppy mop down the crap trap and vigorously agitate until an unusual gurgling is heard.

Hey presto! An unblocked dump box! There is no need for expensive plumbing devices when the MAG team is on your side.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

What? Another Sonic cheat? How many of these could there possibly be?

To enter this rather natty little cheat press Up, C, Down, C, Left, C, Right, C hold down A and press Start on the title screen. Now play the game as usual and get yourself to the bonus section at the end of level one. As soon as Sonic appears, press B and you'll see that Sonic turns into a ring. Now move the ring outside the boundaries of the maze and press B to turn it back into Sonic.

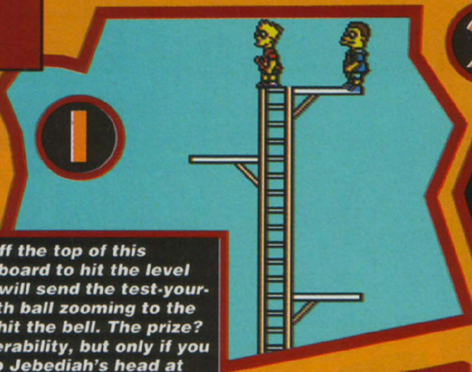
Now, wait for Sonic to float down until he reaches a totally new maze that's filled with bonus items galore! Bounce about the maze and you'll find new level skips, extra lives and Chaos Emeralds! Good grief, whatever next?

SCORE 700
TIME 0:44
RINGS 39

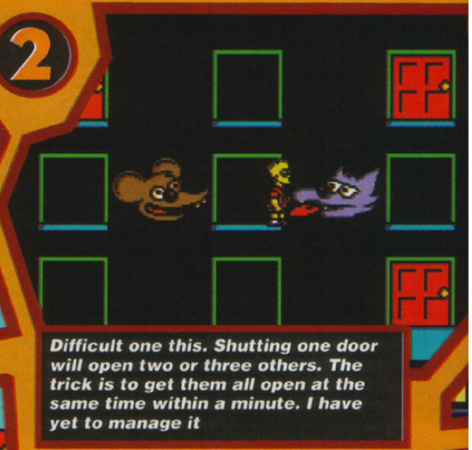
LEVEL 3

CONTINUED

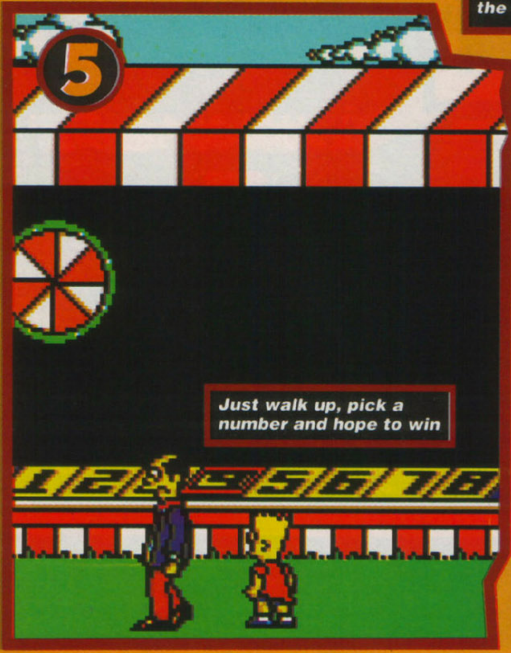
Krusty's Funland is one of the easiest levels to collect all the goals on, but the demon clowns are a major problem. Just take your time and try to run away or jump onto a tent if you can. Don't worry too much about trying to win all of the money because you'll find that there is nowhere to spend it.


1

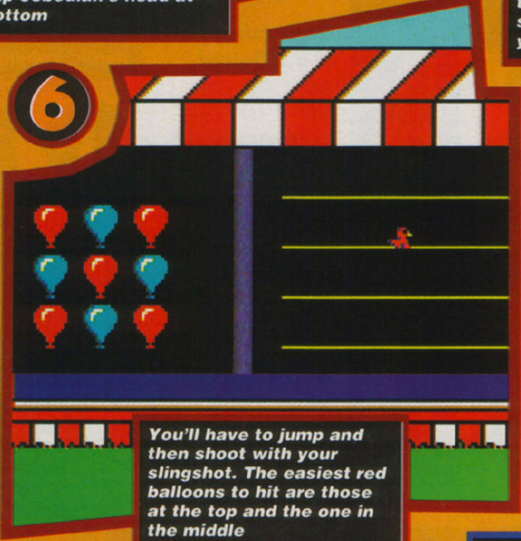
Leap off the top of this diving-board to hit the level which will send the test-your-strength ball zooming to the top to hit the bell. The prize? Invulnerability, but only if you pick up Jebediah's head at the bottom


2

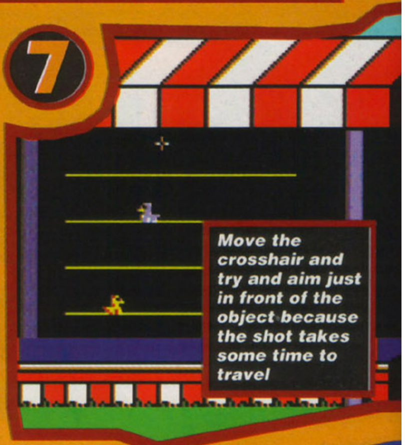
Difficult one this. Shutting one door will open two or three others. The trick is to get them all open at the same time within a minute. I have yet to manage it


5

Just walk up, pick a number and hope to win


6

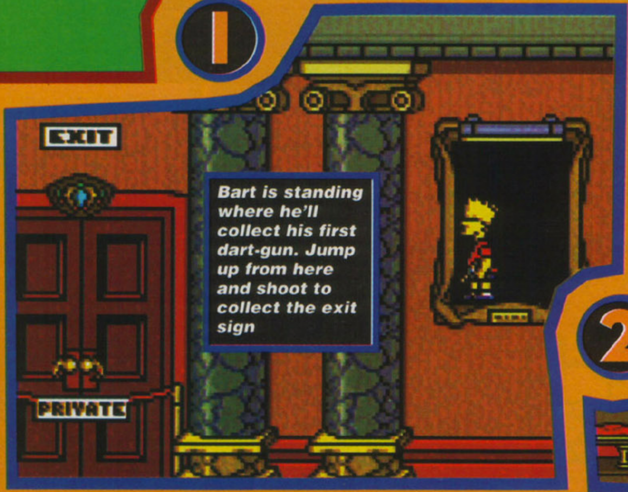
You'll have to jump and then shoot with your slingshot. The easiest red balloons to hit are those at the top and the one in the middle


7

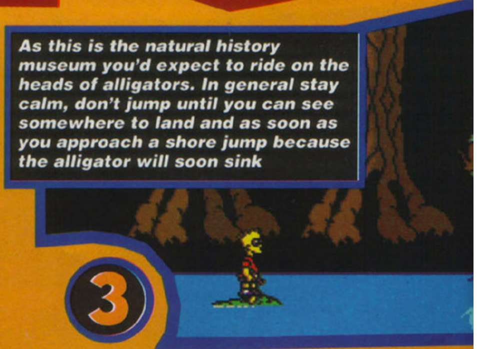
Move the crosshair and try and aim just in front of the object because the shot takes some time to travel

LEVEL 4

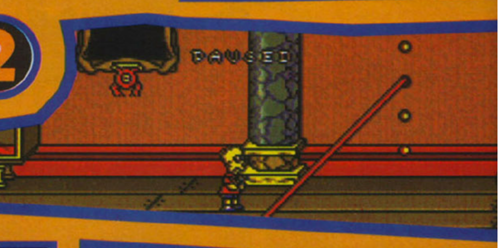
Collect six exit signs spread over this very long and varied level. This is one to be taken slowly and deliberately because it isn't easy. It is definitely one for the seasoned platformer.

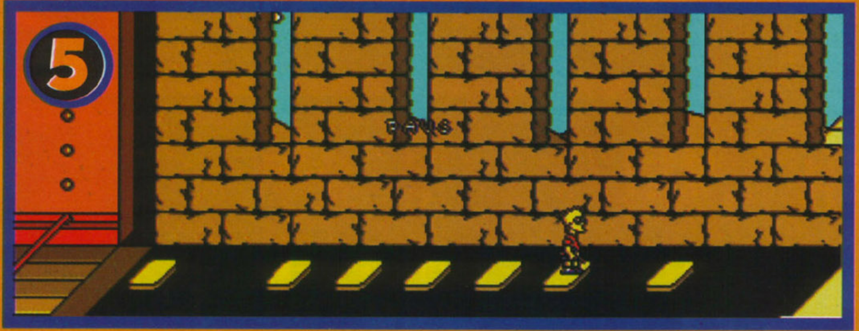

1

Bart is standing where he'll collect his first dart-gun. Jump up from here and shoot to collect the exit sign

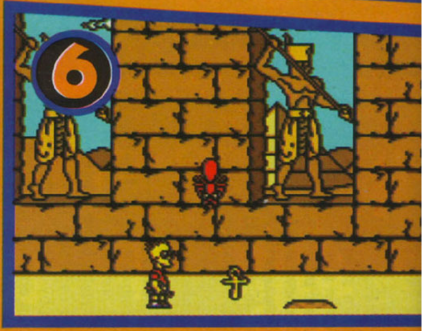

3

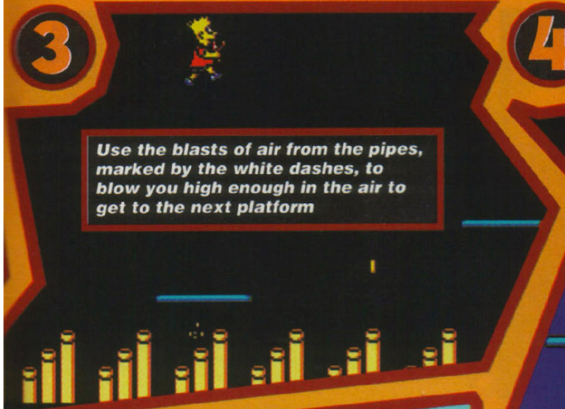
As this is the natural history museum you'd expect to ride on the heads of alligators. In general stay calm, don't jump until you can see somewhere to land and as soon as you approach a shore jump because the alligator will soon sink


2

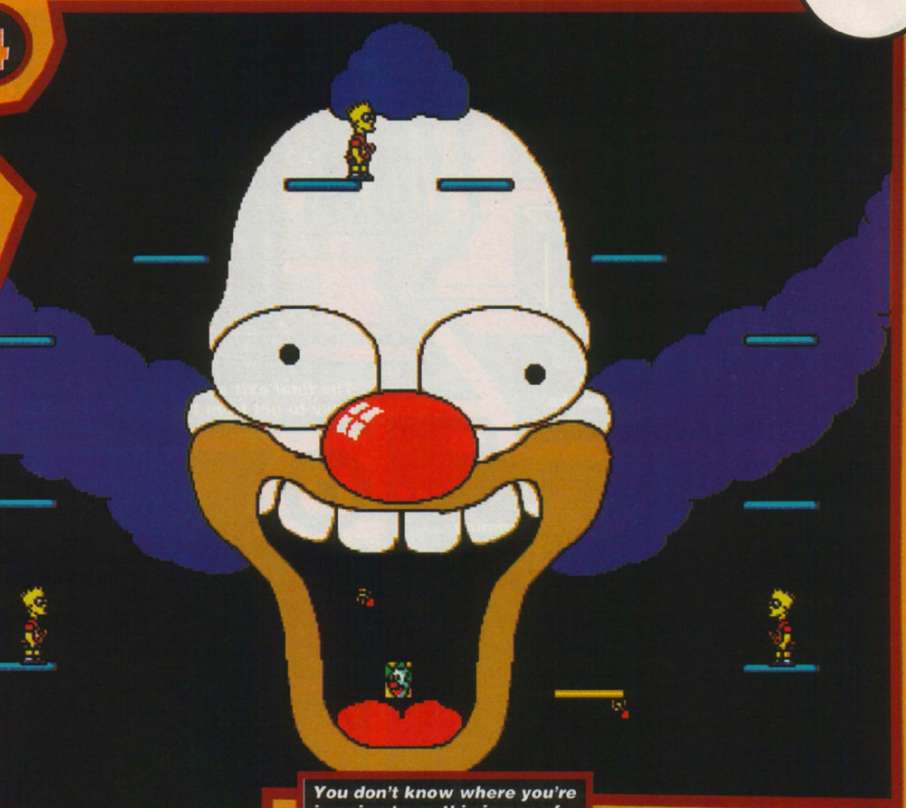

5

This shows where all the stones appear. Follow the letters and remember that there are never more than two on screen at once, and they are only there for a short period

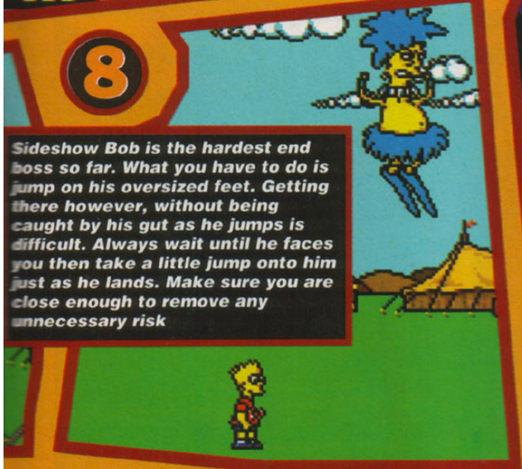

6



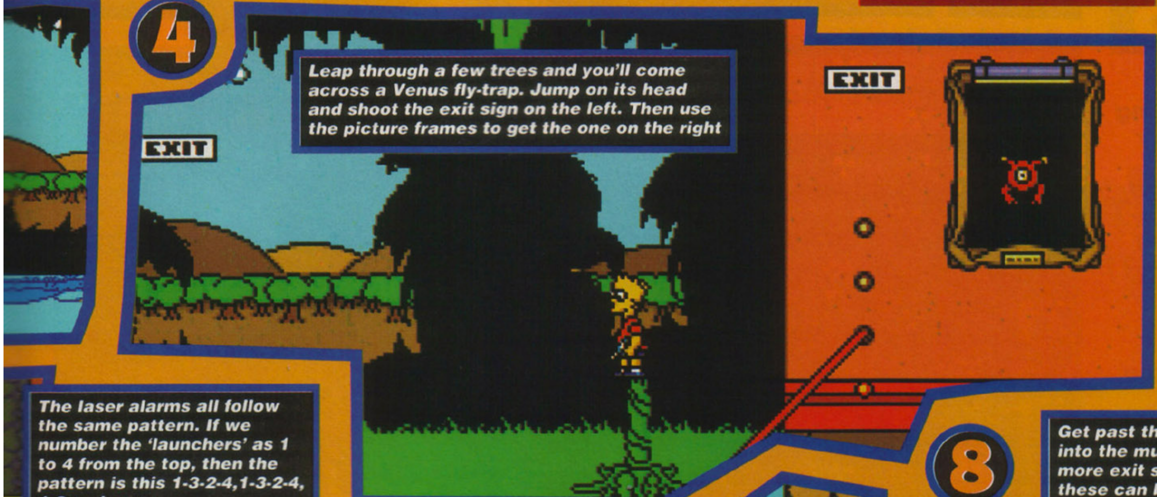
Use the blasts of air from the pipes, marked by the white dashes, to blow you high enough in the air to get to the next platform



You don't know where you're jumping to so this is one of the most frustrating parts of the game. Fortunately you now have a full map



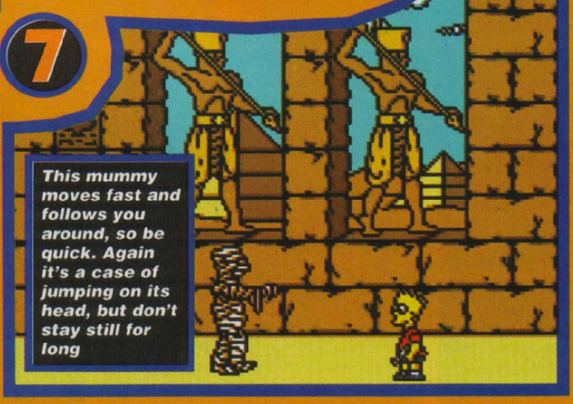
Sideshow Bob is the hardest end boss so far. What you have to do is jump on his oversized feet. Getting there however, without being caught by his gut as he jumps is difficult. Always wait until he faces you then take a little jump onto him just as he lands. Make sure you are close enough to remove any unnecessary risk



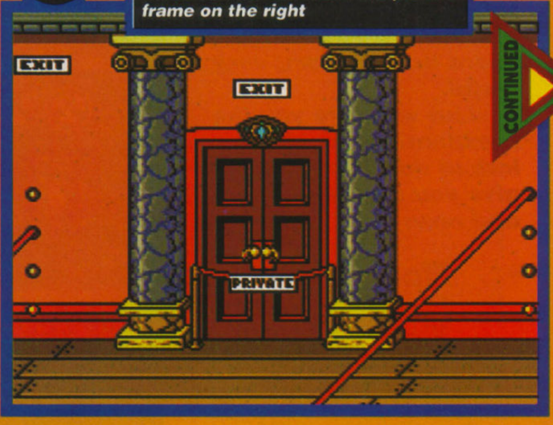
Leap through a few trees and you'll come across a Venus fly-trap. Jump on its head and shoot the exit sign on the left. Then use the picture frames to get the one on the right

The laser alarms all follow the same pattern. If we number the 'launchers' as 1 to 4 from the top, then the pattern is this 1-3-2-4,1-3-2-4, 1-3 and so on

It takes a bit of working out. The basic gist is that jumping past the statues in the right order will relinquish enough ankhs – which you collect – for a small lump to emerge in the ground. You then jump on this lump, which causes the screen to start scrolling. The real problem here is the large number of rats. Nothing you can do but be careful



This mummy moves fast and follows you around, so be quick. Again it's a case of jumping on its head, but don't stay still for long

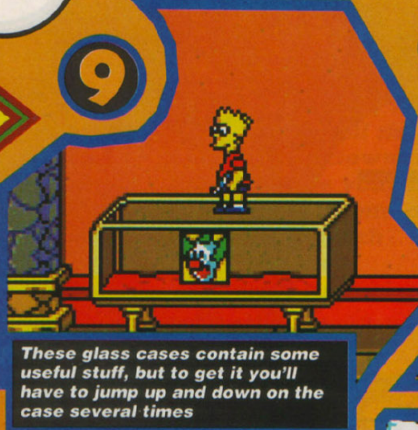


Get past the mummy and it's back into the museum proper with two more exit signs to collect. Both of these can be shot from the picture frame on the right

CONTINUED

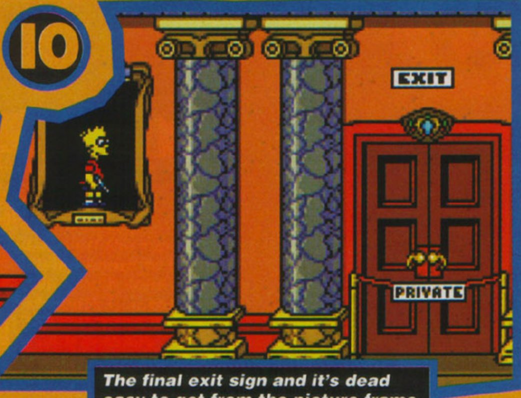
CONTINUED

9



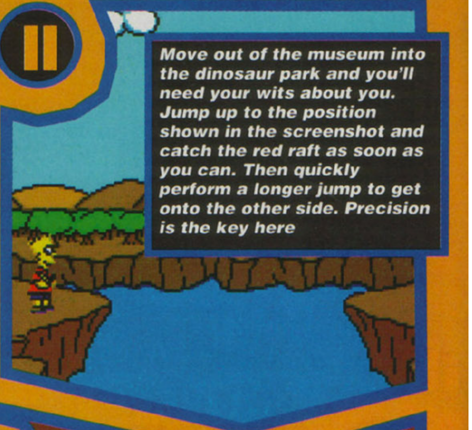
These glass cases contain some useful stuff, but to get it you'll have to jump up and down on the case several times

10



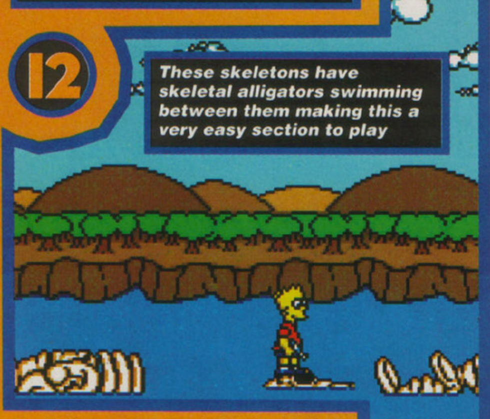
The final exit sign and it's dead easy to get from the picture frame

11



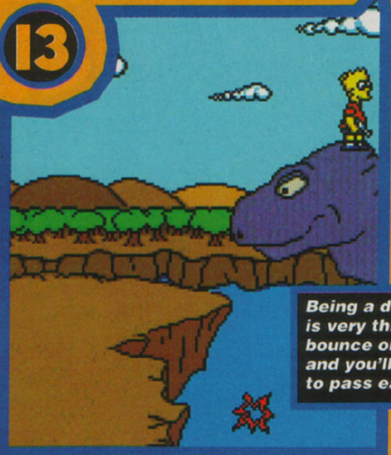
Move out of the museum into the dinosaur park and you'll need your wits about you. Jump up to the position shown in the screenshot and catch the red raft as soon as you can. Then quickly perform a longer jump to get onto the other side. Precision is the key here

12



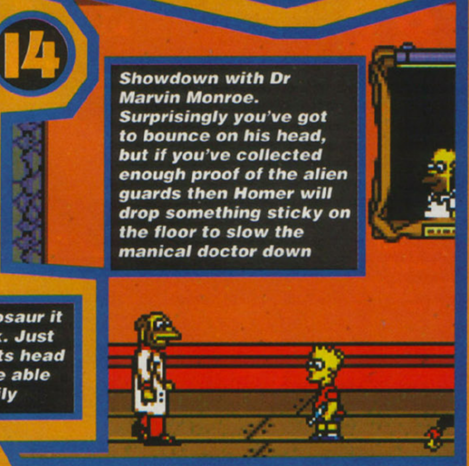
These skeletons have skeletal alligators swimming between them making this a very easy section to play

13



Being a dinosaur it is very thick. Just bounce on its head and you'll be able to pass easily

14



Showdown with Dr Marvin Monroe. Surprisingly you've got to bounce on his head, but if you've collected enough proof of the alien guards then Homer will drop something sticky on the floor to slow the manical doctor down

LEVEL 5

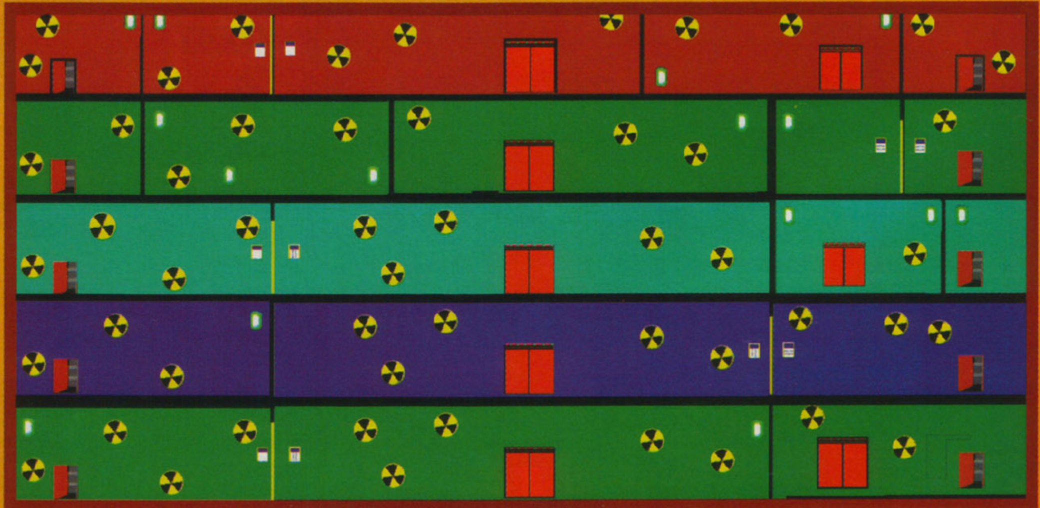
The object here is to wander around collecting all of the nuclear power rods. Our map shows exactly where to find all of them except one, which Maggie will hand over when you've picked up all of the others.

You can only carry four at a time so give some to Marge when you see her.

It is also advisable to collect all the doughnuts you can. You'll be able to call up Homer to eat one and scare away all the aliens in that room, very useful.

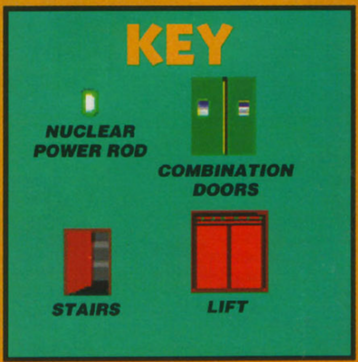
Lisa will give you the combinations for the locked doors, but we can give you them right here and now:

Floor 1: 14
Floor 2: 32
Floor 3: 11
Floor 4: 41
Floor 5: 21



(Above) Bart's looking glum because he knows he has to be very careful when jumping over the waste barrels. All floors have similar tricky situations

(Below) The all-important stairway that leads to all of the floors. Some rooms can only be accessed via the stairs



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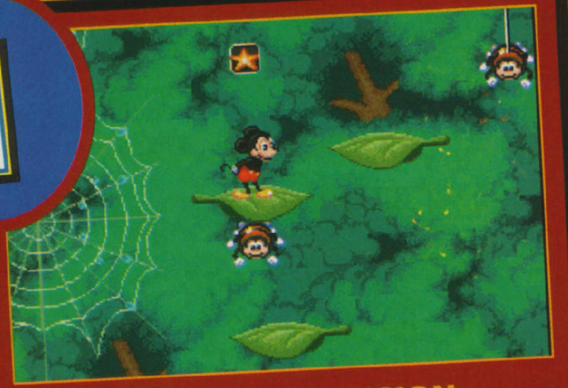
OCT'92

MEGA FILE

They're bouncy, bouncy, bouncy, bouncy, bouncy and that's the wonderful thing about platform games. But we're even more wonderful and to prove it here's a list of the best and worst platforms around. Hurrah.

1



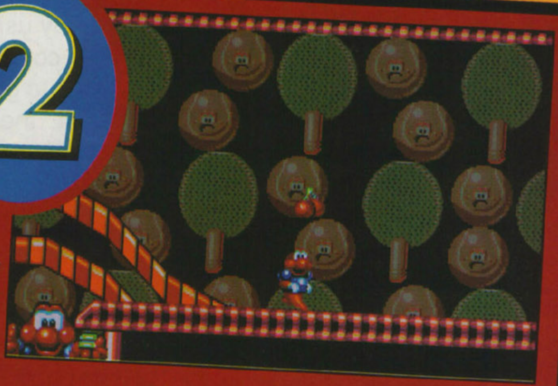
CASTLE OF ILLUSION

SEGA • £39.99

This would make Walt Disney jump for joy. The gameplay is set at just the right difficulty, the 'one more go' factor is at its optimum. Detailed graphics, enthralling sound and, of course, Mickey Mouse finish off this superb product. Without a doubt the best available.

89%

2



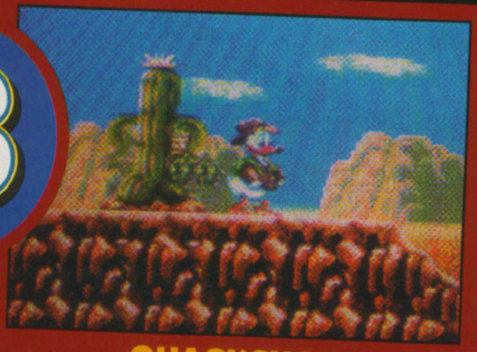
JAMES POND II

ELECTRONIC ARTS • £39.99

Sonic has high speed scrolling, but Robocod is even faster. Take on the evil Dr Maybe and bounce around his wonderfully illustrated toy factory. Included are hidden rooms and loads of gimmicks. Unfortunately a couple of minor bugs stopped this from getting the top spot.

87%

3



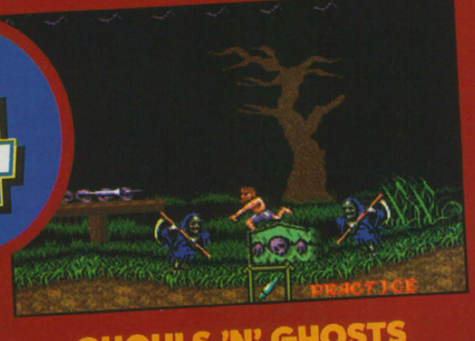
QUACKSHOT

SEGA • £39.99

Outrageously good, some would say cartoon quality, animation and graphics make this game really special. The gameplay isn't quite up to the standards of the top contenders, but this is more than compensated for by the presentation. This will impress your granny.

87%

4



GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

SEGA • £44.99

The fame of appearing on Neighbours has pushed the price of this game right up the fortune bracket. It is one of the best and something that every budding hack 'n' slash knight should try. Millions of squillions of power-ups and big levels ensure that you keep playing for a long time.

86%

5

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

SEGA • £34.99

The game that was designed to show off the Mega Drive's abilities at their best is ageing now and has been surpassed by more recent releases. Will Sonic 2 change that situation?

85%

6

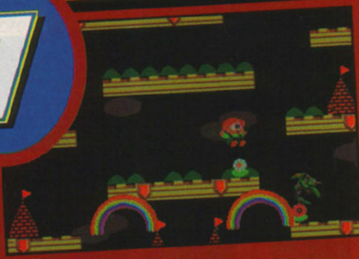
TAZ-MANIA

SEGA • IMPORT

A recent addition which follows all the lines of a classic platform game. It is packed with addictive gameplay, tricky puzzles, monsters and amusing graphical bits. It is a real shame that it's just too easy.

85%

7



RAINBOW ISLANDS

TAITO • IMPORT

Yet another cutesy, lovey-bundles game that scores well. One of the pioneers of sickenly pretty graphics, this one'll have have everyone except your little sister reaching for the barf bags. Those of you with a strong stomach will love it.

83%

8

NEW ZEALAND STORY

TAITO • IMPORT

If you are still after more vomit worthy cutekins action (I'm certainly not) then New Zealand Story is next on the list. This Bubble Bobblesque coin-op conversion is a tad on the hot side. It is however, spoiled by a few slowing-down problems.

82%

9

KID CHAMELEON

SEGA • £39.99

Not a teddy bear in sight! Although the graphics are uninspiring in places the gameplay makes up for this short-coming. What really sets this apart from the rest of the bunch is the ability to alter the persona and playing style of your character.

81%

10

WANI WANI WORLD

KANEKO • IMPORT

This game is weird. Although the gameplay is simple enough, it's based around an ageing two-player coin-op, the graphics are enough to induce a migraine. A bunch of drug crazed hippies were probably on the production team.

79%

DOWN THE PAN

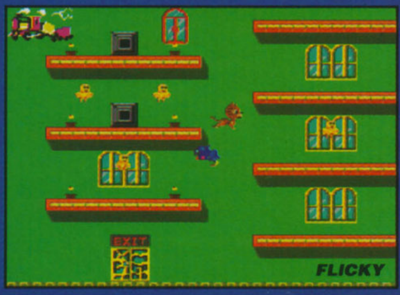
The top 10 games are the best of this rather fluffy bunch and many would make ideal presents for the female in your life – sister, mother, girlfriend or even wife! There are however, a few products out there that would, if presented to your loved one, earn you a slap in the face. How do you spot the wilting daffodils though? Easy, look at our chart.

DARK CASTLE

1. MONSTER HUNTER
2. DARK CASTLE
3. GHOSTBUSTERS
4. FLICKY
5. ALEX KIDD

There are only five games on the lavatory list this month because we have decided in our infinite wisdom that while the 10 worst platform games do exist the best of the worst (if you get my drift) aren't really that bad at all. A good example of this is James Pond. The line-up is designed to point out which games you should avoid at all costs.

GHOSTBUSTERS



FLICKY

MEGA PHONE

Send all of your letters, photos and bribes to Megaphone, MAG, Maverick Magazines, Waters Green House, Waters Green, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 6LF.

OUT WITH THE OLD

Please can you help me! I own Super Monaco GP. I have completed the first 16 races and won The World Championship, but when I carry on to the next year the passwords I am given never work. Please can you shed any light on this. The mag's brill – keep up the good work!
Martin Rochins

John: *You are using the passwords given from the second year aren't you? The passwords from the previous year won't work because it's now a new season.*

If you're doing everything right though, I can't see there being any problem at all. Have you written them down correctly?

RATINGS ROW

I am writing to you about the ratings you gave to the games in the Mega File in issue one. I think you gave good games like Gynoug and Streets of Rage ratings that are too low. I am not surprised when you stick the game on easy or normal level and complete it in two-player mode.

By the way, I thought that this file was for shoot'em-up games, Streets of Rage is a beat'em-up!

The mag is looking good but it reminds me of Games-X, which most people thought was a bit, er…how can I put it? Crap!
PS Kid Chameleon is incredibly easy (except one level, Hills of the Warrior 1)
Chris Davis, Bolton.

John: *If you think Kid Chameleon is so easy why don't you help everyone out and produce a players' guide then eh? You might even win yourself three games!*

I can appreciate your comments concerning the Mega File but the boundaries of the different game categories are a bit hazy and many games don't really fit into any particular genre. Your comments on our scores are also fair enough. Everyone is entitled to their opinion.

As for Streets of Rage being hard…well, if you're as good at games as you seem to think how come you find the hard level such a challenge? Dave managed to get all the way to the end in one sitting. This was alone and on the hardest level.

Incidentally, I happen to think that Games-X was good.

MORE, MORE, MORE

When I went to my local newsagent to get my monthly computer mag I spotted your nice looking magazine. My first impression of the magazine was the well-designed cover, but when I got home I noticed the way you do your ratings, which is marks out of 10. Why not have ratings out of 100 to give an accurate percentage like Mean Machines does? This is quite a popular magazine around here. Also why not try and be a little bit more generous on your markings?
Bryan Jones

Jools: *The reason our component ratings are out of 10 is because we didn't want the overall rating to look like a straightforward average of the individual marks.*

For example the most playable game on the planet could have abysmal sound and if the final mark was an average of these scores then the mark for sound would lower the average, thus giving the game a lower overall mark than it deserved.

As for our marks being too low, we feel that an average game should get 50 per cent.

UPGRADE?

Now let's get things in perspective, first I have to congratulate you on a first-class magazine, I've read loads of magazines and yours is set to be a top contender for 'Britain's best-selling magazine'. The screenshots in others are minuscule compared to the whopping sized screenshots in your mag. For example in nearly every

STAR LETTER • STAR LETTER

HOW MUCH?

I am writing to ask your opinion on the ludicrously high price of Mega Drive games. Having only recently bought the machine I must say that I was shocked by the loony prices. The last machine I had was a Spectrum about five years ago and the games were no where near the 40 quid being asked for a Mega Drive cart.

Is there any hope of the prices coming down? What do other people feel about this? Am I being unreasonable?
B Gillespie

John: *It's a sad fact that the prices are so high but it would seem that maybe something is due to change in the coming months. Apparently a number of parties are in the process of reporting Sega (and indeed Nintendo, which is guilty of the same crime) to the Office of Fair Trading.*

All being well, if any action is eventually taken we might see prices coming down. Try writing to your MP and maybe we'll see some

Mega Drive mag they printed news on Sonic II and they just showed one pretty little screenshot. When I bought your mag I was surprised to find it absolutely jam-packed with huge sized pictures of the blue and spiky one's second outing.

I was going to suggest how you could improve your magazine but the only way you could do that would be to place a free game cartridge on the front. Believe me your mag is excellent, I kid you not. Other magazines will be sinking their heads trying to fight your mag off.

Keep up the good work lads and ladies.

***John:** Maybe you missed the point of our Sonic II feature. They weren't actually real screenshots you see, we made them up! There were two genuine ones but the rest were all things that we would like to see in Sonic II when it eventually arrives. Maybe if you try reading the words instead of just looking at the pictures you might understand things a little more.*

Thanks for the good hard arse lick anyway, it's always nice to have a few genuine creeps writing in! By the way, who are you? It always helps to add your name at the bottom of a letter so we know who we're answering.

STICKY PROBLEM

I have found that your mag far outstrips the Sega officials by a long chalk, both in terms of content and design – not only is Jane good at her job, she's also good looking! Enough though, no more praise, here's a downer.

My Sonic sticker was creased – tacky – if possible I feel cover mounted gifts should be inside the mag, not on the cover. Also, which of you lot had leafed through my copy of the mag after playing with their joystick? Some of the pages were stuck together and have caused rips with me trying to read those damn fine articles of yours.

Despite the little niggles – well done on your first issue. 8.756241 out of 10. I expect over 9 next time, no problem!

Yours (especially Jane),
P Ellison, Stockport

***John:** Cover mounts inside a mag? They are there to attract readers, so they wouldn't be much use inside would they now?*

The problem you experienced with the pages being stuck together is caused by a problem involving our over zealous printers. What you experienced is a problem with our gum-streaming. This is where the centre pages are lined with a thin strip of glue to stop them falling out. Unfortunately, too much was used this time and it has leaked out all over the place.

Personally I can't see any reason why we shouldn't score at least 11 out of 10 on your score system next time.

By the way, what official Sega mags? There aren't any.

OH SHIT!

I am writing to you for some strange reason. I was reading through your mag when I realised that there was a lot of cursing. Please stop, because my dad reads through all of my Sega mags.

Could you please answer the following questions for me.

1. What is the best out of these games:

Terminator, Alien 3, Revenge of Shinobi, Wrestlewar, Budokhan and Speedball 2?

2. Should I buy; Action Replay Pro, Powerbase Converter or an Arcade Power Stick?

Gerard Hugher, Co Down

***John:** I'm sorry that you feel this way about the 'cursing' in our mag, but we're all a bunch of angry folk and often feel the need to let off steam within the pages of this tome. With the video game market in the state that it is we all feel incredibly agitated when we think of the punters being ripped off in such a cruel and mercenary manner. The price of games is just despicable these days isn't it?*

As for the answers to your questions:

***1.** Personally I think that Speedball 2 is really shit hot.*

***2.** Action Replay is ace for cheating, the Powerbase is superb if you've got tons of crappy Master System stuff and the Arcade Power Stick is one of the best joypad replacements on the market. Take your pick!*

JUST SHUT UP

Dear Jason, Pam, John, Jools, Jon, Jane, Hugh and Dave (I couldn't decide who to write to).

Don't you just hate those people who write to magazines saying things like "My console is better than his" or "I've just bought myself a Super NES so the Mega Drive's crap." AARGGH!!!! It makes me so sick.

Why oh why (sorry, you're not points of view) can't these people be happy with what they've got instead of bickering all the time.

I own a Mega Drive, before I got it I loved everyone of my other consoles and computers. So my message to them is SHUT UP, STOP BICKERING AND JUST PLAY YOUR BLOODY CONSOLE!

Also why can't mags put surveys on a separate piece of paper cos there's nothing worse than cutting pages out of your favourite magazines.

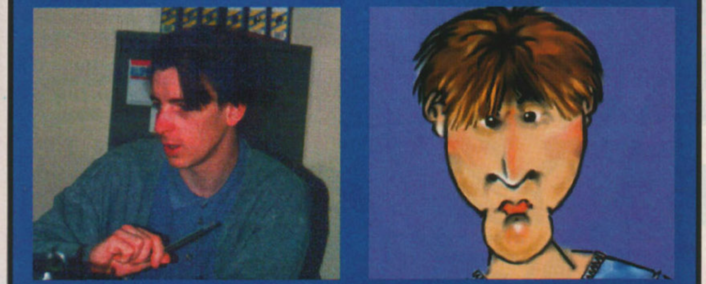
Your first issue was brill, keep up the good work.

Stephen Drysdale, Perth.

***John:** Yep, I agree that all this bickering is utterly stupid but to be honest people bringing up the subject yet again is almost equally as boring. Fair enough, play your games and as long as you're having fun that's all I'm bothered about.*

Well Stephen, ever heard of a photocopier?

GERRY DOAK: A LIFE?



Jase has wandered to pastures new...well over to the art desk of our sister publication Control. Forsaking the Mega Drive for the SNES...the fool! Following in the hairy one's footsteps is professional Scotsman, Gerry Doak.

Born some 24 years ago in Greenock, a really, really nice bit of Glasgow (honest), he decided to travel. After discarding his nappies he finally made it to London, where he worked on the wrong side of the bar until he wandered up to Macclesfield (why?). Meeting up with the *MAG* crew in a pub led to a bout of heavy drinking; and Gerry blackmailed the unconscious Hugh into giving him a job. (I still can't understand a word he says! – Pam.)

YUCK IT'S STICKY MOMENTS TIME

Yep we were so impressed by your confessions in last month's survey here are a few of our favourites...

"Most Stickiest? Grammar!" **Alistair Dabbs** (27) Bromley Kent. (Look no one loves a smart arse – Pam).

Paul (27) of ***** went careering into the back of a parked vehicle in poor visibility and had the audacity to claim that the car in front didn't have working brake lights. As said lights were scattered all over the road it was his word against the other driver's. The other driver then admitted to having one faulty brake light and was duly prosecuted. Our Paul got away scott-free. Unless a large cheque arrives soon Paul, we'll print your surname.

Damon Corey (18) of Weston-super-Mare had a sticky moment working as a waiter. While flambéeing whitebait in a fancy restaurant, Damon was still suffering the mouth numbing effects of a filling.

Having no control over his mouth it was all to easy to lose copious amounts of saliva down his chin. Alas he picked the moment when he was doing his bit in front of a table to dribble all over the diner's food.

Robert Kozlowski (13) of Bristol was swimming and grabbed the behind of someone he thought was his girlfriend. Sadly it was a women some 50 years older than his girlie. Whoops!

Mrs Amanda Law (29) of St Neots, Cambridgeshire, **Carla Anderson** (19) of Coleorton, Leicestershire and **Karen Tonge** (20) of Huddersfield wouldn't reveal theirs – the teasers! We'll be getting in touch soon ladies!

"I lead a dull and average life – never varied always crap." **Peter Shellswell** (22) Newbury Berks. Well Peter if the ladies above write in we'll let you know!

Adam Fincham (14) of East Lothian, was one of many whose mentioned treacle – get a life!

IT'S TIME FOR US TO GO, BUT YOU CAN READ IT ALL AGAIN!

NEXT MONTH

If you are having trouble with Virgin's recently released Terminator then help is at hand with our thorough and helpful guide to every single level of the game!

I could use this car to get away from Jools before he gets here!

Look out next month for all the juicy gossip about the new Mega Drive super hero – Wonder Dog. Is the game as good as the hype claims? Keep your eyes peeled for issue 3!

We're a little loathed to reveal who our Star Play celebrity is next month. However, his name might possibly begin with 'J' and end with 'ohnny Herbert'. Apparently he's got something to do with driving fast cars round and round at great speed.

Ooh, Johnny Herbert. He's very nice you know. Maybe if I'm a really good girl I might be able to go and meet him. Phwoar!
Wibble, wibble. Ooh, Mr Bumpties got a racing car? Coo! Brum-brum, vroom!
This isn't all that's in next month's mag you know. There'll also be 20 pages of guides plus reviews of all the latest games!
Oh no! The page is overrun with girlies. Arghhh!

Having a spot of bother with Batman, the recently released action film tie-in? Next month we give you the complete solution of how to finish all those niggly little difficult bits that make you want to lob your joypad through the nearest available window.

We'll also bring you the best collection of tips and cheats for your Mega Drive found anywhere.

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DISTRIBUTION BY UMD
Tel: 071 700 4600
Fully SOR

PRINTED IN THE UK BY
BPCC Magazines Ltd

MAVERICK MAGAZINES

Mega Drive Advanced Gaming,
Waters Green House, Waters Green, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 6LF.
Fax: 0625 511593

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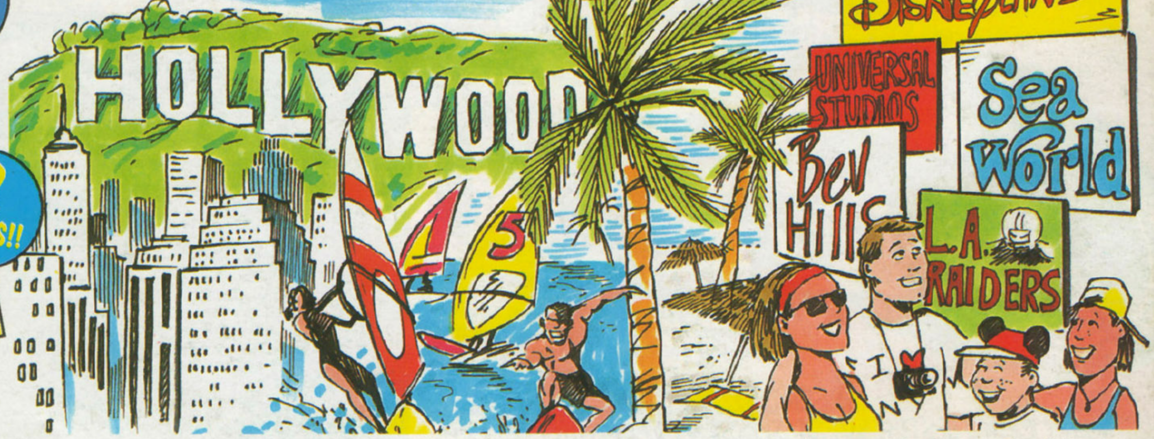

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